

Iraq defiantly rules out surrender and moves chemical weapons to front line

Saddam invokes 'mother of battles'

Pentagon calls speech suicide note for army

By MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND MICHAEL EVANS IN LONDON

HOPES for peace in the Gulf evaporated yesterday with President Saddam Hussein's defiant speech ruling out an Iraqi surrender. His stated determination to fight on made the launch of what the American defence secretary called "one of the largest land assaults of modern times" inevitable.

Even as his foreign minister was heading for Moscow with an answer to President Gorbachev's initiative, Saddam declared: "The mother of battles will be our battle of victory and martyrdom. They want us to surrender but they will be disappointed."

President Bush called the Iraqi leader's 35-minute Baghdad radio broadcast "very disappointing" and John Major said it contained "no glimmer of hope, no glimmer of compromise". A senior Pentagon official described it as "a suicide note for the Iraqi armed forces".

Marlin Fitzwater, the White House spokesman, condemned Saddam's "determination to maintain the aggression and the absence of compassion for his people and his country."

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Our forces remain on a steady course. The liberation of Kuwait continues."

Saddam's address came as British military sources reported that his frontline forces were being given chemical munitions for artillery and multi-barrel rocket launchers.

There were "increasing signs" of Iraqi readiness to launch a chemical attack and there was even a possibility of a pre-emptive strike.

The distribution of the shells and rockets was first noticed two days ago, suggesting that Saddam had probably decided to reject the Soviet peace plan some time before his statement, which made no reference to Mr Gorbachev's initiative.

Instead, the speech concentrated on Iraq's offer to withdraw, made last Friday.

"They wanted the word withdrawal, but they don't care for it now and talk about new things," he said. "By the word withdrawal they meant stripping Iraq of all power. They want from us many new concessions. There is no path except the path that we have chosen, after which there will be no bright sign in the sky or brilliant light on earth. We will proceed on this path which Tariq Aziz has carried to Moscow."

Mr Aziz was due to meet Mr Gorbachev at the Kremlin immediately after his arrival last night. His talks were scheduled to last half an hour, suggesting there would be little or no time for negotiation.

The Soviet foreign minister, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, who is in Spain, said he had not given up hope of a peaceful solution in spite of Saddam's apparent determination to fight on. "We should all keep up hope until there is no hope at all," he said. Mr Bessmertnykh returns to Moscow today and he said that his talks with Mr Aziz could still be crucial. "I hope we still have this extra chance to use political pressure to find a way out of the crisis. If we fail it will be a tragic moment for the Gulf people and for all of us."

Ali Akbar Velayati, the Iranian foreign minister, said he was more optimistic about a solution to the conflict after talking to Mr Aziz when he stopped in Tehran on his way

to Moscow. "I think there is more optimism, more hope now that we have been talking. They want more details of Gorbachev's peace plan."

Many Western commentators dismissed Mr Aziz's mission as largely irrelevant in the light of Saddam's broadcast. Even before he reached the Kremlin, the initiative was cracking under the pressure of hardening demands by the Western allies, Iraqi attempts to play for time and the contradictory interests of the main protagonists. It had threatened to open deep rifts within the coalition and between the West, the Soviet Union and the Third World. In the end, Saddam's intransigence may have saved the allies from an agonising diplomatic dilemma.

But while the White House felt that Saddam's intransigence gave little room for optimism that Mr Aziz was carrying a positive response to the Soviet initiative, officials did not entirely rule out the chance that his hardline rhetoric could be a cloak for concessions. Against that remote possibility, Mr Bush has sent President Gorbachev a list of American terms for a withdrawal from Kuwait, including demands that it be completed within four days. That would force the Iraqi army to leave behind much of its heavy armour. The Americans also insist that all allied prisoners of war must be released immediately and all minefields identified.

Saddam's action may be comparable to that of General Gaidi, who turned down proposals for a temporary UN administration of the Falklands in 1982. Britain strongly opposed the plan, but felt obliged to give diplomacy a last chance. Within two days of the Argentine leader's rejection, British troops landed and the war began.

In Washington, the debate continued on when a ground offensive should begin. Before Saddam spoke, Mr Bush had reportedly not yet made a final decision on timing. Though the consensus is that it will now commence any day, one senior military official said that the air offensive — now reportedly destroying more than a hundred Iraqi tanks a day — was proving so successful that it might be worthwhile to keep it up.

American spokesmen reported at least three more border clashes between allied and Iraqi ground troops and successful helicopter attacks on four separate enemy positions. An Iraqi battalion commander had been captured during the attack on a bunker complex, when 435 men were taken prisoner on Wednesday. Intelligence documents were also seized.



Shot in the arm: troops of the Royal Scots receiving vaccines against germ warfare

British bombard border targets

FROM GORDON AIRS
IN A POOLED DESPATCH
FROM SAUDI ARABIA

BRITISH troops unleashed the biggest artillery bombardment since the Korean war on Iraqi targets yesterday. The sunny desert scene was breathtaking as the allied guns — all pointing at 45 degrees into the sky — stretched across the horizon for six miles.

In front of me, Scotland's lowland gunners, the 40th Field Regiment with three batteries of eight self-propelled M109 guns each, aimed at three targets. To the left, the 2nd Field Regiment, used the same weapons to target enemy artillery, ammunition dumps, and command and control headquarters.

To my right, the 26th Field Regiment, also armed with M109 guns, took aim at more targets. Beyond them, the 32nd Heavy Regiment trained their trusty old eight-inch howitzers on the Iraqi forces. Finally, on the extreme right flank, the 39th Heavy Regiment joined in with the army's latest artillery, six multi-rocket launchers. Another six launchers were armed and standing by to attack any gun positions that returned fire.

The lowland gunners stood poised for action. Then came the screams up and down the line: "Fire... Fire... Fire". Battery by battery, they hurled 95lb high-explosive shells 15,000ft into the enemy sky to land about 12 miles away.

Even wearing ear-plugs, I found the blast deafening. After each volley, the long guns bowed down to be reloaded. The used shells were thrown out rapidly and it started all over again with choking cordite smoke billowing darkly around us.

Further down the line other guns spewed out smoke in unison, followed seconds later by a dull "crump". Then came the computer-controlled rockets, each with 644 deadly bomblets streaking off into the

Continued on page 22, col 2

SATURDAY

Absorbing the white man

Alan Franks meets the Surrey man who was assimilated into one of the world's most remote tribes
SATURDAY REVIEW

Callow's new direction



Simon Callow, once a leading advocate of actor power who was tipped for the Olivier mantle, is now as likely to be seen in the director's chair
SATURDAY REVIEW

Dig deep for urban renewal

Francesca Greenoak goes to town in the latest of her series on creating a garden
SATURDAY REVIEW

Sponsors are on the run

This week's news of lost sponsorship at the Royal International Horse Show is an indicator of much deeper problems as sport feels the effects of recession
SPORT

How safe is your money?

Three years after the Financial Services Act, loopholes are still being exploited at the cost of millions to ordinary investors
WEEKEND MONEY

Two cruises on offer

This week's Saturday Offer is a choice of two luxury cruises around southern France
SATURDAY REVIEW

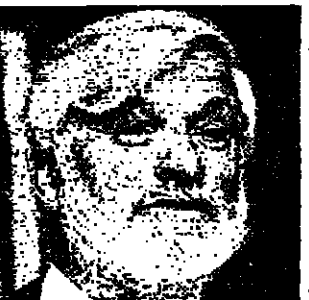
The Times on Saturday: order your copy today

INSIDE

Bomb hoaxer sent to prison

The first bomb hoaxer to be caught since the explosion at London's Victoria station was jailed for three months yesterday. A 21-year-old Irishman admitted having made a call in which he claimed there was a bomb at Lewisham rail station. Page 6

Bates ousted



Ken Bates, the chairman of Chelsea, has been voted off the Football League's management committee. Page 38

Pay prediction

Public service pay will rise ahead of inflation by more than 4 per cent this year, according to a forecast published today. Page 7

White dilemma

South Africa's ruling National party is divided over whether to apologise to the victims of apartheid. Page 10

Blue Arrow plea

Efforts were made to recruit some of the City's wealthiest men to try to bail out Blue Arrow's record £837 million rights issue, the Central Criminal Court was told. Page 23

Saving on fuel

Petrol prices may rise in next month's Budget, Kevin Eason discovers that drivers can make savings now. Page 32

PE2 results

The PE2 results of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, December 1990, will be published in The Times tomorrow. Copies will be on sale today at 10pm at Victoria, Charing Cross and Kings Cross railway stations and at Leicester Square. Page 22

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Cabinet is firm on ERM

By ROBIN OAKLEY
POLITICAL EDITOR

THE cabinet took the unusual step yesterday of reaffirming its belief in British membership of the exchange-rate mechanism of the European monetary system — a policy adopted only last September.

A senior minister said last night that the declaration had been intended as a very clear statement against the views of the six leading economists who wrote to The Times advocating an immediate lowering of interest rates and withdrawal from the ERM. The action was said to be a firm reassertion that the whole cabinet backed the priority aim of getting inflation down and keeping it down and that there would be no devaluation of the pound.

In the Commons yesterday John Major argued that his government should not be blamed altogether for the recession. He said: "Three of the G7 countries are now officially in recession. Two more have a downturn in output, and you give too much authority to me if you think I am responsible for all that."

Dollar weakens, page 23

Young dismisses Rover censure

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LORD Young of Gifford remained unrepentant last night after a Commons enquiry censured him for not disclosing to Parliament and the European Commission the £44.4 million of "sweeteners" given to British Aerospace to clinch the sale of the Rover Group.

After publication of one of the most damning reports from a Tory-dominated committee of MPs, Lord Young said that given the same circumstances today he would not act differently. When the deal was raised in the Commons John Major, the prime minister, did not seek to defend the former trade and industry secretary but confined himself to praising the remarkable renaissance in the car industry, including Rover. Trade and industry ministers refused to comment until they have studied the report.

Lord Young, who once described the sale as "the deal of the century", said yesterday he judged it was one of his most significant achievements while in government and accused the Commons trade and industry committee of descending into party politics. "I am concerned about British

At the Westminster launch
Continued on page 22, col 6
Parliament, page 8
Leading article, page 15
Rover recovery, page 25

No glimmer of hope

By ROBIN OAKLEY

JOHN Major, the prime minister, said yesterday that there was "no glimmer of hope, no glimmer of compromise" in Saddam's speech. He said that the speech was very disappointing and was "an immense opportunity lost".

Asked if land war was now inevitable, he said: "We propose to ensure that Kuwait is liberated and, unless Saddam

Hussein does comply with the Security Council resolutions in full, then there will be a land war."

Mr Major promised that the allied forces would do all they could to keep casualties to a minimum. "We have a very great care for the safety of our troops," he said, adding, "there is absolutely no doubt that the Iraqis will lose."

Coming at the end of an already distinguished career, her greatest achievement was her partnership with Rudolf Nureyev. The two supreme dancers of their day coming together in an unforgettable conjunction which enriched both of them. It was characteristic that they were never content just to show off their own qualities. They worked like a

two-headed eagle, absolutely as one in their purpose, and with the humility and seriousness to learn from each other.

Their performances together, especially during the 1960s, and above all in *Marguerite and Armand*, created for them by Frederick Ashton, were unequalled. On one occasion the audience simply went on applauding right through an interval at Covent Garden, long after the dancers had given up returning to acknowledge the clapping; the applause stopped only when the curtain was about to rise on the next part of the programme.

Happily, some of her performances are preserved, thanks to film and videotape. Choreographers were inspired by her so that a little bit of her lives on whenever someone else takes up her roles. The supreme example

of this maybe the title role in Ashton's *Onegin*. He was Britain's finest choreographer, and she was for three decades his muse, helping in the conception of many of his best ballets.

The lyrical movement in *Onegin* showed her at her greatest, ranging from a simple expression of loving trust to a tragic depth, and embodying her own joy in dancing and her lively sense of humour too.

In spite of illness and retirement, her own lively spirit remained to the end. It was obvious in the documentary programme made for television to mark her 70th year, and again last year when Covent Garden gave a gala in her honour.

She was a great woman as well as a superb artist.



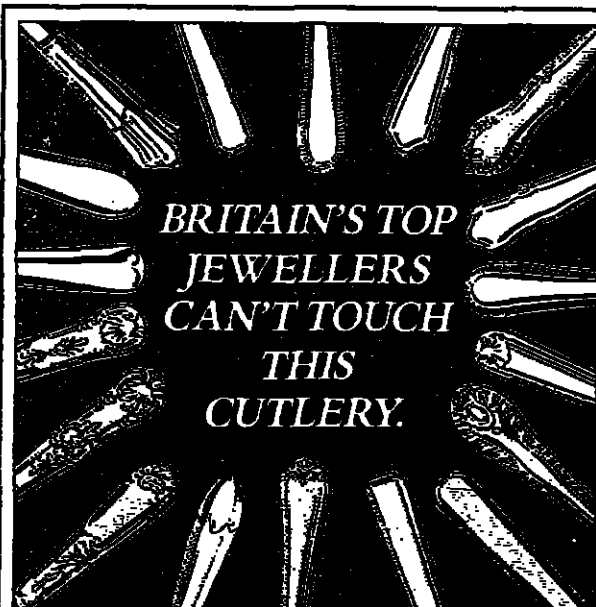
Fonteyn: mourned by the world of ballet

Fonteyn, the greatest British dancer, dies at 71

By JOHN PERKIVAL

FOR millions of people all over the world, the death yesterday of Margot Fonteyn at the age of 71 will seem to be as bad a loss as that of a personal friend. She was more than simply the greatest British dancer. For audiences of stage, film and television, she summed up the whole art of ballet, and made its artistry so directly expressive that to see her was to love her.

Continued on page 22, col 2



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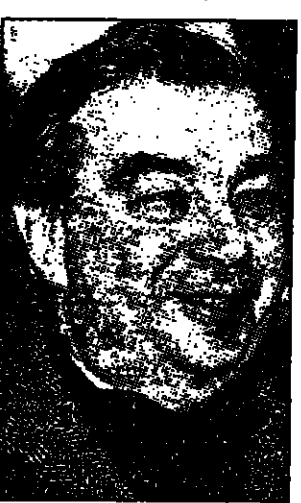
Gorbachev's future tied to fate of peace plan

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

MOSCOW was last night waiting anxiously for the arrival of the Iraqi foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, with Baghdad's response to President Gorbachev's peace plan. Even as his plane was en route from Tehran, President Saddam Hussein's public pledge to continue the war appeared to end all hopes of an early settlement by peaceful means.

The stakes in Moscow were high and the tension was palpable, as first Mr Aziz's imminent arrival, then snatches of Saddam's address, then the announcement of a late-night press conference by Mr Gorbachev's spokesman, chattered across Soviet teleprinters. Success or failure for the Gorbachev plan has implications not only for the war in the Gulf, but for future Soviet foreign policy and for the fate of President Gorbachev himself. The political forces in Moscow are probably as finely balanced as they have ever been.

Had the Gorbachev plan been accepted in its entirety by Iraq and subject to negotiation with the United States, Mr Gorbachev would have had every reason for satisfaction. His personal role, emphasised by his personal envoy, Yevgeni Primakov, earlier



Primakov: put emphasis on Gorbachev's role

this week, would secure for Moscow a key role in any settlement. By acting as guarantor for the security of Iraq and the Iraqi regime, Moscow would have rescued much of what it lost in supporting the multinational coalition. It would have a potentially powerful friend in the region and at the same time be in a position to consolidate relations with the richer Arab countries. In geopolitical terms, this would be Moscow's ideal.

A diplomatic triumph in the Gulf would also do much to strengthen Mr Gorbachev's own position. His tarnished reputation abroad would be instantly burnished; the victims in the Baltic violence would become suddenly less important in the light of all the potential war casualties saved by not having to go into battle. The Soviet leader would regain much of his lost standing as international statesman.

A diplomatic achievement would also assist Mr Gorbachev at home. His declining authority would be reversed, and he might again be able to rule without requiring the visible support of the army and the KGB.

Peace in the Gulf on Moscow's terms would help to placate those in the Soviet establishment who opposed the turn from Iraq in the first place and so possibly reduce the pressure on President Gorbachev from the conservatives. This, in turn, could facilitate another turn in domestic policy as one source of friction between the president and the army command was removed.

The outright rejection of the Gorbachev plan would be almost as great a catastrophe for the Soviet leader as its success would be a benefit. Rejection would not automatically exclude Moscow from an eventual peace settlement, but it would make it more difficult to claim a significant role.

Leading article, page 15

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London Transport faces many challenges in the next three years. Not least the question of funding and the inevitable choices it imposes. The vital role played by public transport in London is beyond doubt, but how should we move ahead and what should our priorities be?

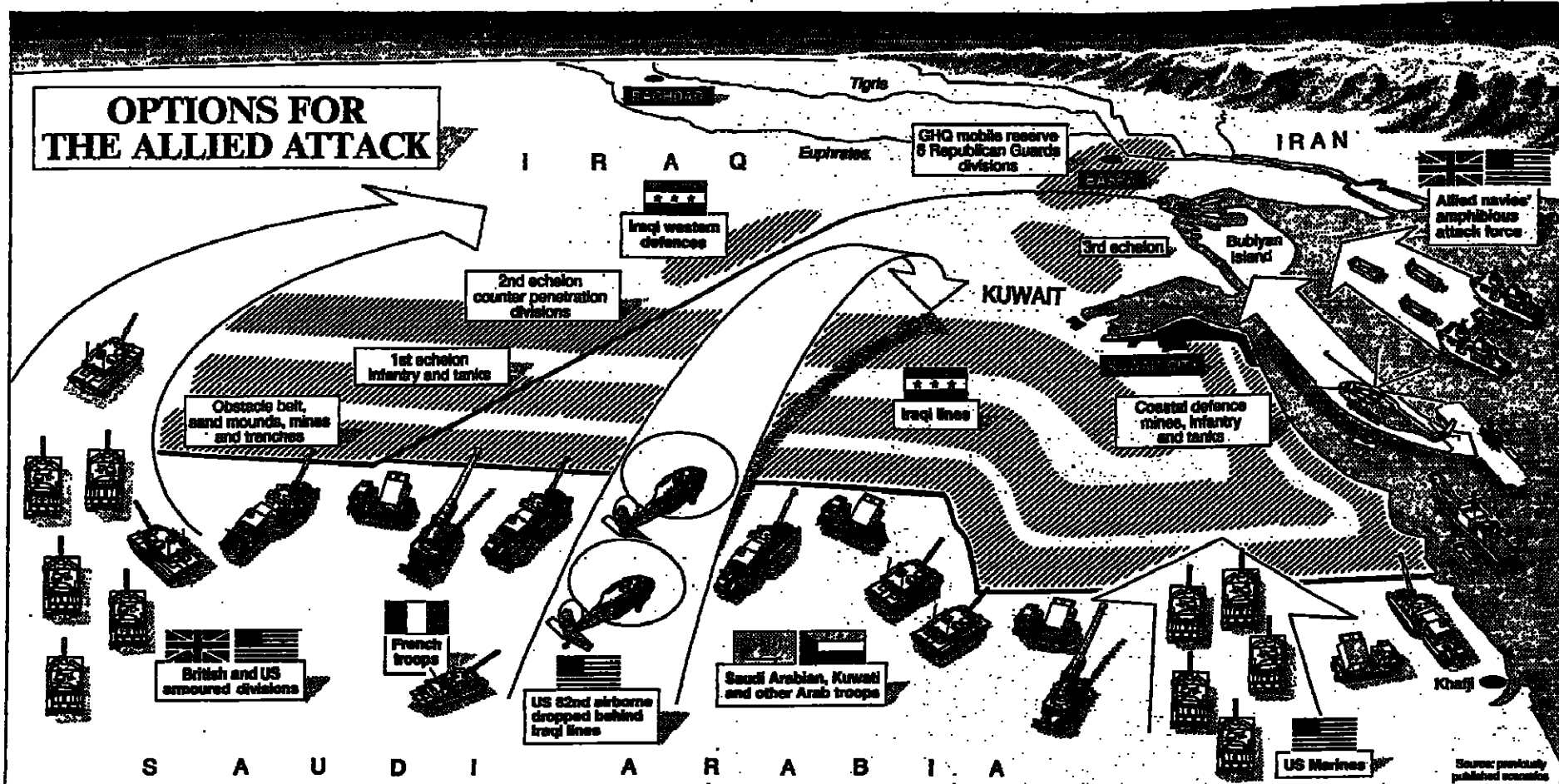
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- **New rail routes**
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- **The travelling environment**
How could we improve information at stations and at bus stops? and other ways in which bus and Underground services could be made more attractive.

Before you write, you may find it helpful to obtain a copy of a leaflet which gives more details, ring 071 227 3490 and we'll send you one. Please let us have your views by 31 March 1991, addressed to: Strategy Consultation, Director of Planning, London Transport, 55 Broadway, London SW1H 0BD.



London Transport



DIPLOMACY

Saddam's defiance lets West escape dilemma

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

WITH the defiant broadcast by President Saddam Hussein that Iraq will continue the fight, the Soviet peace proposals yesterday appeared to have come to the end of the road. The Moscow mission by Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, was dismissed by many Western commentators as largely irrelevant in light of the broadcast.

But even before he reached the Kremlin, the initiative was cracking under the pressure of hardening demands by the Western allies, Iraqi attempts to play for time and the contradictory interests of the main protagonists.

It had threatened to open deep rifts within the coalition and between the West, the Soviet Union and the Third World.

In the end, Saddam's intransigence saved the allies from a diplomatic dilemma. His rejection of the Soviet peace terms will be a blow to the Kremlin, but will make it easier for President Gorbachev to face down the hawks who were critical of his support for the American-led coalition.

Saddam's action is comparable to that of General Galtieri of Argentina, who on May 19 1982 turned down the final United Nations proposals for a temporary UN administration and joint British and Argentine observers' sovereignty in the Falkland Islands. Britain was bitterly hostile to the plan, widely supported by many other countries, including many allies, but felt obliged to allow diplomacy a last chance. Within two days of the Argentine rejection, British troops landed in the Falklands and the war began.

Washington and London also have fundamental objections to the Soviet plan. They say publicly it gives no guarantee that all the UN resolutions will be implemented. There are no provisions for the immediate release of prisoners of war. There are continuing conditions. And it allows Saddam to escape the responsibility for and consequences of aggression.

Privately, the gut objections are that a diplomatic fudge would allow Saddam to survive. An orderly timetable

would allow an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait which could be turned to propaganda advantage. The White House wants a humiliating route to encourage his overthrow.

Most Europeans do not support the loading of the proposals with extra conditions to make it unacceptable to Baghdad. France, humiliated by the collapse of a similar pre-war plan of its own, has taken an increasingly tough line over the past 48 hours. But Belgium, The Netherlands, the Pope and several European politicians, mostly on the left, would support a ceasefire initiative at the United Nations, if Iraq began a withdrawal.

The Europeans are worried that public opinion would not support any ground attack while a peace plan was still on the table. They fear the increasing anti-Western mood in much of the Muslim world will translate into a lasting ambivalence after the war.

They see the unofficial White House goals going well beyond the Security Council resolutions, and believe that public opinion already suspects the Americans of wanting to establish a lasting hegemony in the Middle East region because of oil and strategic interests.

Most Arab coalition members also want no dilution of the UN proposals. They want Saddam to be killed or overthrown. But with one eye on mounting public concern over the killing of Iraqi Muslims, and another on the growing anti-Western mood fanned by Muslim fundamentalists, governments such as Egypt and Morocco feel obliged to be seen supporting Soviet efforts.

Saddam's troops, page 14

Allied commanders weigh up risks of 'single punch' strategy

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

ALLIED commanders have two options in considering the best way to defeat Iraq: to go for the complete land-air-sea assault, using every capability to smother the Iraqi forces, causing and taking large numbers of casualties; or to launch "one big punch" against a vulnerable section, in the hope that it will break the fighting spirit of the Iraqi forces throughout Kuwait.

The latter option will have its supporters. If it worked, the ground war would be much shorter, perhaps just a week, and the casualties on the allied side would be limited, one of the primary objectives of General Norman Schwarzkopf, the American commander in charge of the allied offensive.

News of a comprehensive defeat of one part of the Iraqi army could cause the rest to crumble. It could be reasonably argued that this option has a good chance of success because of the enormous damage inflicted on Iraq's armour and infantry after weeks of air bombardment and artillery fire. If the "single punch" option succeeded in breaking the will of the Iraqi soldiers, it would save the allies from having to participate in possibly the most difficult and most dangerous battle of all, the fight for Kuwait City.

British forces, in particular, are experts at this kind of warfare, known as Fibra - fighting in built-up areas - because of the operational training in Northern Ireland, Germany and Cyprus. But the Iraqis have packed the city with troops hidden in apartment blocks, government buildings and at every strategic position. There are also mines and booby traps across the city.

If the smaller scale land battle failed to provoke a total surrender, the allies might lose

the momentum, which could lead to a stalemate and a prolonged battle for Kuwait City. But once allied troops are in Kuwait, General Schwarzkopf will be under pressure to liberate the country as quickly as possible. That rules out a long siege of Kuwait City.

The single punch option, therefore, would seem too risky. There is no guarantee, for example, that all the Iraqi units spread out across Kuwait and on the border with Iraq would necessarily get to know of an allied victory in one section of the Iraqi defences. Radios are scarce and the leadership in Baghdad would undoubtedly claim that Iraqi forces had scored a great victory over the allies, which could spur other units to fight on and fight harder.

An all-out offensive would seem the safer bet, even though the casualty toll could be much higher. The preparations already being carried out indicate that this is the way General Schwarzkopf is thinking. Apart from the painstaking operation in the northern end of the Gulf to clear a path through the minefield for a US amphibious assault, American Apache helicopters, pilots of the "Scrambling Eagles" 101st Airborne Division have been flying north to check out areas where air assault troops would land far behind enemy lines; armoured units have been manoeuvring up and down the Kuwaiti border, making it impossible for the Iraqi reconnaissance patrols to work out where the initial frontal breach of their defences will take place; and special forces teams are believed to be spreading out across Kuwait to pinpoint key Iraqi positions for an allied artillery barrage.

The Khafji incident three weeks ago, the only evidence

of Iraqi offensive ground action so far, proved that some of President Saddam Hussein's soldiers were prepared to fight to the end. In spite of the depletion of the Iraqi divisions, there is still a large army in Kuwait, capable, at least in theory, of "stubborn resistance", as one American military commander put it.

A land battle would be chaotic for both sides, especially as much of the fighting would take place at night.

Italians are convicted of mine sales

Rome - Seven Italians have been convicted by a court in Brescia of illegally exporting nine million land mines to Iraq between 1982 and 1986 (Paul Bonaparte writes). The mines are now believed to have been laid along the Iraqi army's defence lines.

The mines, produced by the Valsella Meccanotecnica company of Brescia, a firm partly owned by Fiat, were sold illegally to Baghdad.

The seven senior Valsella executives all received suspended sentences of under two years. Despite the light sentences, pacifists outside the court were satisfied. This was the first time an Italian court had convicted arms merchants, Giancarlo Savoldi, a Green MP said.

£5m seizure

Washington - US customs has seized nearly \$10 million (£5 million) worth of goods bound for Iraq or Kuwait since the UN imposed an embargo after the August 2 invasion. John Riley, the customs service director, told a congressional panel that most of the seizures were made in the early stages. (AFP)

Bishop's attack

London - The Right Rev David Jenkins, the bishop of Durham, criticises the "just war" theory in a book, *Praying for Peace: Reflections on the Gulf Crisis*, published today. He says pacifists do not face the problems of not confronting aggressive power and tyranny, but "just war" supporters do not face the fact that war is "incredibly bloody and solves nothing".

Pipeline bombed

Madrid - Unidentified bombers yesterday blew up part of a fuel pipeline supplying three American military bases in Spain, causing no injuries. The bombing near Cordoba, the first attack on American military targets in Spain since the Gulf war started, came amid growing public opposition to Spain's involvement in the war effort.

Peace calls grow

London - The anti-war campaign was stepped up when campaigners lobbied parliament and highlighted the plight of American servicemen who do not want to fight in the Gulf War. Resisters International claimed that at least 12 American servicemen have been arrested and deployed to Saudi Arabia where their applications as conscientious objectors are being dealt with.

ALLIED FORCES

CLAIMS: British troops took part in their biggest ground action in the war as they joined a massive barrage on a front nearly ten miles wide. More than 1,000 men took part in the bombardment. US forces mounted new aerial reconnaissance and attack missions north of the Saudi border and helicopter gunships wiped out an Iraqi radar site.

IRAQI FORCES

CLAIMS: President Saddam Hussein said Iraq would continue its struggle, confident of victory.

ALLIED WAR AIMS

Resolution 660 of the United Nations Security Council, passed on August 2, condemns Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and calls for an unconditional withdrawal and negotiations. Resolution 678 authorises Kuwait's allies to "use all necessary means" to uphold previous resolutions.

LOSSES

Iraqi forces shot down an American helicopter, killing both the pilots, during attacks against their frontline positions. The helicopter crashed after being hit during the attacks. An F16 fighter and a CH47 Chinook helicopter also crashed over Saudi Arabia but the pilots were not listed as combat losses.

EUROPE

Rejection of Soviet proposal is dictator's 'suicide speech'

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN politicians yesterday voiced widespread gloom after President Saddam Hussein's unrepentant speech, believing that the second journey by Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, to Moscow would not deflect an allied ground attack on occupied Kuwait.

Saddam's words were a "suicide speech", said Laurent Fabius, speaker of the French national assembly. Giulio Andreotti, the Italian prime minister, who had been among the warmest supporters of the Moscow-Baghdad shuttle diplomacy, admitted that "at this point there is little that can be done". Shortly before hearing news of the Iraqi leader's speech, he had told parliament

in Rome: "Should Baghdad's reply once again be negative, the whole world will see that Iraq is responsible for rejecting this last chance not to carry on with its crazy challenge to international law."

Stock markets on the continent seemed unsurprised, as traders had assumed that Iraq would fight on. The Paris bourse saw its strongest close since last August and the German share market ended the day virtually unchanged.

Throughout the latest diplomatic flurry, France, along with Britain, has been pessimistic, while the rest of the EC had seen an opportunity for peace. The real division between Britain, France and the rest of the

community lies in the question of how far the allies should go in any war against Iraq.

Recent predictions: Michel Rocard, the French prime minister, predicted yesterday before Saddam rejected the Soviet peace plan that the Iraqi leader would not survive as, once defeated, he would have "problems at home".

Schwarzkopf: determined to limit casualties

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THE TIMES FRIDAY FEBRUARY 22 1991

ALLIED TACTIC

Heavy rock up to Iraqi

Guerrillas set sights on Patriot batteries

Italy: Seven convicted of mine sales

£5m seizure

Bishop's attack

Pipeline bombed

Peace calls grow

Bush will

ALLIED TACTICS

Heavy metal rock called up to break Iraqi morale

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN SAUDI ARABIA

ALLIED commanders along the increasingly noisy northern front were able yesterday to pound the maxim from Von Clausewitz quoted in the basic fighting manual of the American Army: "Time not used by the attacker benefits the defender."

To demonstrate that the lesson had been learnt, military lorries with loudspeakers began broadcasting heavy metal rock music over no man's land towards Kuwait to encourage defections and undermine the morale of the Iraqi troops. The blaring sound, similar to that used to force General Manuel Noriega to quit the Vatican mission in Panama, is interspersed by regular messages in Arabic: "If you desire a hot meal, better treatment and your personal safety, give yourself up to the American armed forces."

Much allied effort has also been devoted to keeping fight-

ing spirits high, with commanders sending repeated messages to impatient infantrymen living in uncomfortable, battle-ready conditions, that the longer the coalition waits, the fewer of them will die.

News of the last-minute diplomatic manoeuvres has come mostly from radios and, despite claims to the contrary, is said by military sources in the field to have had a limited effect on morale by spreading what one US soldier called, "On-off, off-on, uncertainty".

The vague hopes of peace have been kept at a deliberately low ebb by officers and by the increasing number of cross-border skirmishes which, along with the ground-shaking bombing of Iraqi positions, have helped to keep thoughts turned to war.

Many younger American soldiers express a combination of fear at the combat most still expect, with a burning desire to start fighting as the only way to end their miserable months in the Saudi desert and return home. "There is nothing you can really do to prepare a human being for the horrors of combat," explained First Sergeant Alfred Ferreyra, a combat engineer for 21 years and will be among those likely to be first to breach Iraqi mine defences.

Another engineer in the same frontline unit, Private First Class Mike Curtis, from California, had just inked the words of the "paratrooper's prayer", first uttered by Abraham Lincoln, on his helmet visor:

"I will study
And prepare myself
And then, when my
Chance will come"

Like the Normandy landings in 1944, Inchon in Korea or other decisive battles in American military history, G-Day — as the start of the land offensive or the "real war" — is universally referred to — will hinge on three elements for its success: speed, force and deception.

Pep talks given by commanders designed to overcome worry have been more down-to-earth than those of their British equivalents. Lieutenant-Colonel Gregory Fontenot, a Louisiana-born battalion commander of the First Infantry Division, recently addressed 150 of his infantrymen, engineers and tankers. "Gentlemen, do not be afraid of fear," he told them, cigarette in hand.

"Rather understand it, grapple with it and cope with it. You are going to know when you are afraid guys. You'll have this need to urinate, you will taste a metal taste in your mouth like you had maybe half a dozen nails, and you will find that you cannot slam a nail up your butt with a sledge-o-matic."

He concluded: "This is not the polo-shirt, Weejuns loafers crowd. Not a whole lot of kids here whose dads are justices of the Supreme Court. We are the poor white middle class, the poor black kids from the block, and the Hispanics from the Barrio. We are just as good as the f--- rest, because the honest thing is that is who I want to go to war with — people like you. And you guys will do great."

Colonel Fontenot touched a point apparent to anyone in the American army: the great number of blacks. According to congressional statistics issued in December, about 12 per cent of all Americans are black, but around 30 per cent of American soldiers in the Gulf are black.

"I do not think we are adequately prepared to defend against terrorist strikes," The American official admitted. "But I think we are as ready as we will ever be."

Apart from road blocks, many allied units have devised complex passwords used to guard their desert billets.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Bush will give word for start of ground offensive

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

PRESIDENT Bush's signature on a national security directive will provide the authority for General Norman Schwarzkopf, allied commander in the Gulf, to start the advance into Kuwait.

Written instructions from the president would be the normal procedure for further military action, although he might merely give verbal orders. But Mr Bush signed a directive on January 15, authorising the beginning of the air campaign. The directive, committing American forces to war with Iraq, was signed at about 10.30am in the White House Oval Office. The air war began about 36 hours later.

The instructions would be given to Richard Cheney, the American defence secretary, who in turn would transmit the orders to General Colin

Powell, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff. He would pass it to Lieutenant-General Tom Kelly, the Pentagon's director of operations.

General Kelly, based at the Pentagon's national military command centre, would send a coded signal to General Schwarzkopf at the allied headquarters in Riyadh, who would pass the battle orders down the line of command. The coded messages sent to "component" commanders would tell them to implement well-prepared battle plans.

Under American and British battle doctrine, commanders in the field have wide scope for individual initiative once they get their orders. This lets them fine-tune plans, based on battlefield conditions, the weather and any last-minute intelligence of Iraqi armour or infantry movements. Division and corps commanders would probably give their subordinate

officers a specific mission and a "broad statement of purpose".

The flexibility of the Schwarzkopf plan will contrast with the rigid Soviet-style doctrine of Iraqi commanders, who would have little or no scope to use their initiative.

Yesterday, in preparation for the next phase of the war, General Schwarzkopf would have examined all the latest satellite pictures to make final assessments of Iraqi positions. Unless the Soviet military had supplied him with pictures of allied troop deployments, from their own satellites orbiting the Gulf, General Schwarzkopf's Iraqi counterpart would base his assessment of the allies on intelligence provided by the reconnaissance patrols which have been probing the Saudi border.

The battlefield confronting the allies looks the same as it did at the start of the campaign, but beneath the

sand bunkers and behind the defensive positions, the Iraqi readiness for battle has changed dramatically. With up to 100 tanks destroyed every day since February 14, when the Americans provided a list of Iraqi armour hit by allied bombers and artillery, Iraq's principal weapons have probably been reduced to 2,100 tanks (from 4,000 at the start of the war); 1,600 artillery pieces (from 3,100); and 1,800 armoured personnel carriers out of the original 2,800. The number of combat aircraft available has been reduced to about 400.

British military sources emphasised that assessments of Iraqi capabilities could not be based on the number of tanks and other equipment destroyed but on whether separate Iraqi units had become non-operational. The surrender of nearly 500 Iraqis to the Americans on Wednesday for example, represented a whole battalion.



Words of war: two men in the Jordanian capital of Amman listening intently yesterday as President Saddam Hussein reaffirmed on Baghdad radio his determination to fight the allied forces in an imminent ground battle. He did not, however, dismiss the Soviet peace plan

CHEMICAL THREAT

MoD reports weapons deliveries to front line

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

IRAQ'S warnings that it will use chemical weapons within hours of a ground offensive being launched became more ominous last night when the Ministry of Defence disclosed that chemical munitions had been distributed to Iraqi frontline forces during the past two days.

The hours devoted to practising putting on and removing the cumbersome protective clothing will, it is now agreed, prove to have been time well-spent. Somehow, the Iraqis have apparently stockpiled in a desert bunker some of the most hideous chemicals, many of which were designed to kill pests. Now they are being prepared as insecticides for people.

The allied soldiers have had to come to terms with harsh medical facts as they prepare to fight an enemy armed with unknown chemicals. They now know that blood agents such as hydrogen cyanide, which enters the body through the lungs, kills by preventing oxygen from reaching the bloodstream.

They have learned how to recognise the symptoms of attack from sarin, soman and

tabun — nerve agents that cause sweating, lung congestion, vomiting and convulsions. Blister agents such as mustard gas cause awful burns, particularly in the groin and armpits, sear eyes and lungs and were used as long ago as 1915 and as recently as the Iraqi war against Iran. Phosgene fills the lungs with liquid in a condition that is known as "dry land drowning". If Saddam were to go a step further and use biological warfare to spread anthrax, cholera, typhoid or even botulism, the effects would be even more horrific.

The coalition forces are confident that the weeks of non-stop bombardment have knocked out much of Iraq's chemical offensive capability. They cannot be certain, however, that enough damage has been done to prevent an attack from being launched.

If such weapons are used, the allied soldiers will have to fight with respirators and nuclear, biological and chemical warfare (NBC) suits. These not only restrict movement, but also prevent easy identification of soldiers and officers. The men get very hot and eating becomes difficult.

The ability of the military to turn innocent chemicals into weapons of war was developed in the 19th century with the growth of the dye trade. During the first world war, 91,000 troops died on the Western front after chemical attacks and up to half a million men died on the Russian front. The use of chemical weapons was outlawed by the Geneva protocol in 1925, but although few such agents were employed in the second world war, their manufacture and use have spread steadily since then.

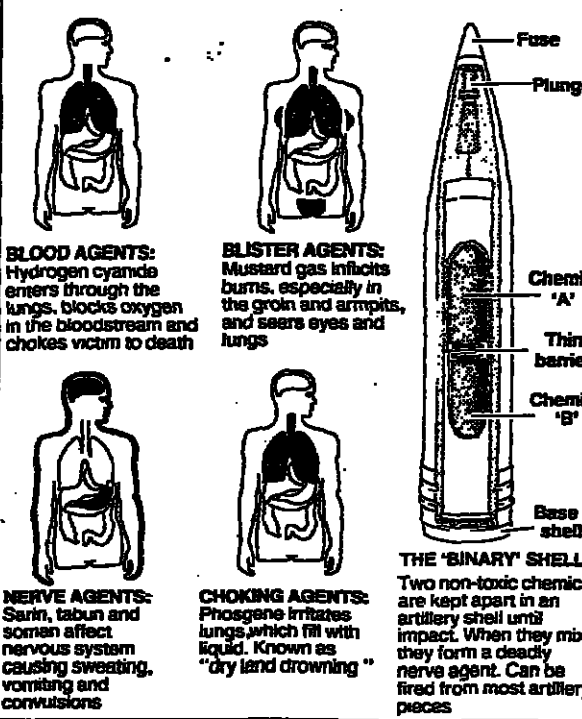
Iraq used a mixture of mustard gas, tabun and sarin, sprayed from low-flying aircraft, to kill at least 5,000 Kurds at Halabja in 1988. There is, therefore, little doubt that Saddam has the will and the ability to use the chemical weapons at his disposal. However, since many of his aircraft are now parked in Iran, he will have to deliver them either from artillery shells or with his few remaining surface-to-surface missiles.

Nobody is certain what sort of chemicals Saddam has available, or whether he has perfected the new "binary" shell that keeps two apparently innocent chemicals such as difluoro and isopropyl alcohol amine apart until the moment of impact.

However he chooses to launch the weapons, Saddam's problem will be how to target allied troops accurately. A shell only contains a small amount of chemical, which vapourises on impact. If the shell is exploded at between 50ft and 200ft above ground, the chemicals can be blown over a wide area. If the chemicals are produced only on impact with the ground, they cover a much smaller area and disperse quickly.

● BONN: The German government unwittingly contributed more than DM1 million (£344,000) towards the cost of building Libya's chemical warfare plant at Rabta, the state prosecutor in Mannheim, Peter Wechsung, claimed yesterday (Ian Murray writes). He said the sum was paid between 1985 and 1989 after the research ministry awarded grants for the project. It thought the money would be spent on a high-tech coal development scheme.

THE CHEMICALS THE ALLIES COULD FACE



ISRAEL

Debate grows on shortcomings of intelligence service

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL yesterday put anti-chemical warfare units on alert and was braced for a possible Iraqi chemical weapons attack linked to the impending ground war in the Gulf. Amid these precautions, controversy erupted over whether the Israeli intelligence services had failed to gather detailed information on Iraq's military capability.

The newspaper *Maariv* said that even at this eleventh hour, Israel still did not know exactly how many tanks, missiles and planes Iraq had and, above all, whether Iraq was able to fit chemical warheads to its rockets. "We may soon find out," one official said.

The dispute has been gathering pace since Moshe Arens, the defence minister, told the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee on Tuesday that Mossad and other intelligence agencies would have to do some "soul searching" after the war. "Iraq has built up tremendous military power. When the time comes for reappraisal, we shall have to see to what extent our intelligence agencies were capable of identifying the magnitude of that power, with its large conventional capability and its wide-ranging non-conventional weapons infrastructure."

Yesterday, General Yehoshua Saguy, a former head of Israeli intelligence, said Israel had made "a terrible mistake" in focussing its intelligence effort on Syria, rather than Iraq. But Yitzhak Rabin, a former defence minister, said Israel had been correct to make the assumption that Syria posed the main security threat.

Maariv said that "on the strategic level" Israel intelligence had correctly evaluated developments in Iraq, had formed unique insights into the personality and regime of President Saddam Hussein, and had successfully predicted the invasion of Kuwait. But, it said, Israel had limited resources and intelligence services had to operate according to priorities.

The controversy has caused shock in a nation which assumes its intelligence services to be the finest in the world, a judgment widely shared outside Israel. In *Israel's Secret Wars, The Untold History of Israeli Intelligence*, to be published on February 28, Ian Black and Benny Morris note the Arab belief that Israel has "a long and dangerous arm controlled by a subtle and cunning mind". But they add: "Whether the awesome reputation of Israeli intelligence is wholly deserved remains a mute point."

AIR OFFENSIVE

Clouds hamper bombing schedule

FROM LIN JENKINS
WITH THE RAF IN THE GULF

RAF bombers are attacking targets which represent the important final part of the air campaign. Group Captain David Henderson, commander of the largest RAF detachment in the Gulf, said yesterday.

However, the pace at which the plan could be completed was being hampered by low cloud, which would be one factor in the allies' timing of the start of a ground offensive. Group Captain Henderson gave no hint as to how far behind schedule the campaign had fallen.

With a high proportion of Tornado missions returning to base over the past few days still carrying their weapon loads after laser-guiding equipment on the Buccaneers was ineffective due to low cloud, the rate of attack has fallen sharply. Jaguars over Kuwait have had similar problems as the pilots are instructed to drop their bombs only after positively identifying the target.

"The targets are a very important final part of the air campaign where we are trying to ensure that there is as little as possible harassment from the air against our ground troops," said Group Captain Henderson. Targets had been chosen specifically to smooth the way for the ground troops. "We have to look at what he has left and ask what he can do with that, and once we have had a guess at what he can do against us and against ground forces then we have to go and attack him again and make sure he could not do those things," he said.

In spite of the poor weather conditions, missions were still being flown on the outside chance that they would be able to drop their weapons. "Because Iraq is not telling us about the weather, while we might have an idea that the weather is bad, you cannot guarantee it. It might just be that at the target there is a hole in the cloud or sufficiently clear area that you can get that attack in," he said.

RAF bases in the Gulf were ready to change tactics from the air bombardment of Saddam Hussein's military installations and forces to air cover for a ground battle. The Tornado GR1s are unlikely to be used over battle lines.

"It would be a case of changing our weapon load on both Tornados and Jaguars. If and when it happens we will look at weapons, whether they be cluster munitions or rockets for the Jaguars or whatever."

The Tornados are continuing to drop 1,000lb "smart" bombs in conjunction with the laser pinpointing system on the Buccaneers. (This report is subject to allied military reporting restrictions)

A smoke alarm with dead batteries is not a smoke alarm.

Don't forget it, check it.

Action urged on courts and police to speed up justice

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

MEASURES to speed up criminal justice which were proposed yesterday include time limits for each stage in a criminal case up to trial, computer links between courts and police, and procedures to encourage early pleas of guilty.

The recommendations to ministers from a working party of officials chaired by the Lord Chancellor's department could have a significant impact in reducing delays in the criminal courts.

Sir Patrick Mayhew, QC, the Attorney-General, said in a parliamentary answer that he was setting up a steering

group to work out a plan of action and estimate costs by the summer recess.

The report, which covers the quality of police files, delays, warning of witnesses and provision of case results and antecedent information, contains more than 160 recommendations.

To reduce delays it calls for a national guideline of eight weeks between the entry of a not-guilty plea and summary trial. Four of those weeks should be for the prosecution to prepare its case.

If the defendant is remanded in custody, the period between plea and trial should

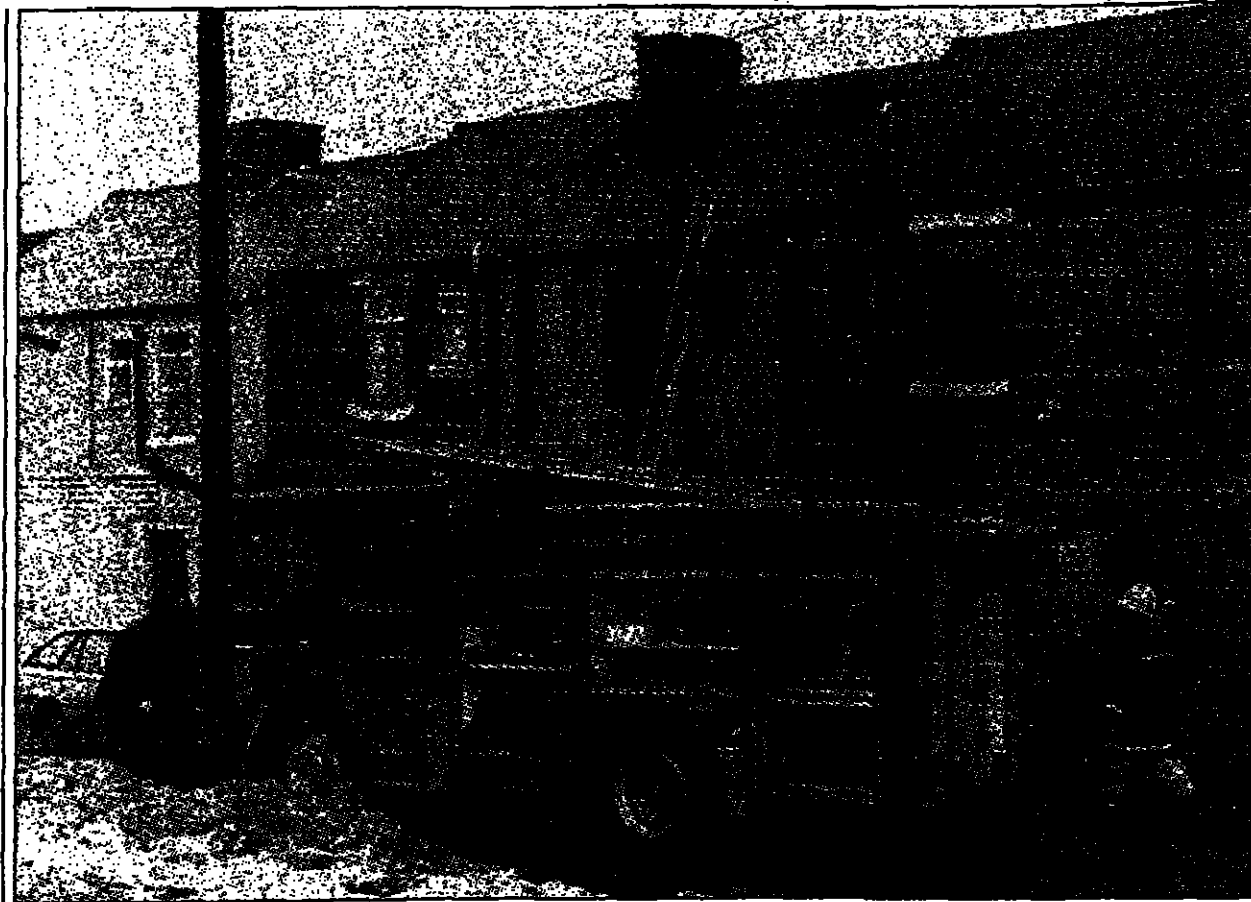
be cut to "an absolute minimum". Although maximum periods are already specified, they are not met in a "significant" number of cases. "We were told in one area that the majority of such cases were granted extensions of time," the report says. Recommending a guideline of 14 days between the entry of a not-guilty plea and summary trial, it says: "Time is of the essence in custody cases and we consider that a tight national guideline is necessary."

In an effort to cut the number of aborted trials through changes of plea, the report proposes that defendants can indicate their plea at the committal proceeding. At the same time, the fact that an early plea of guilty will attract a discount on sentence should be published, it says.

Other proposals to cut delays include: computer links between courts, with police given access to obtain information on cases; courts to communicate case results to the National Identification Bureau; greater use by police in the most serious cases of the charge procedure, rather than issuing summonses, as a quicker and simpler way of bringing defendants before the courts; and appointing temporary stipendiary magistrates where there are unacceptably long waiting lists for trials.

The report calls for improved listing practices by courts and new national standards in the way police prepare and present files. It says full files, with all witness statements, are not necessary in every case, but should be prepared from the outset when the defendant has been charged with an indictable-only offence, is likely to be heard in the Crown court, has been charged with assault, or is likely to deny the offence.

The report says the Crown Prosecution Service should make sure it has enough staff to review and prosecute cases effectively.



Family of five dies in house fire

A FAMILY of five died when a fire swept through their home early yesterday. A husband and wife, ten-year-old twin girls and a two-month-old girl were trapped by the blaze which engulfed two adjoining houses being converted into one at Eldon, near Bishop Auckland, County Durham.

A neighbour, Mrs Jacqueline Raine, aged 45, said the building was the home of Norman Coates, aged 40, his wife Margaret, aged 38, her twin daughters by a former marriage, and the couple's daughter.

Mrs Raine said she could hear the couple shouting for help: "I have never heard anyone screaming like that before. Then the big downstairs window exploded.... It was just like a big flame-thrower going up."

Mr Coates and his wife were previous neighbours who were converting their homes into one. A family friend said their former marriages ended in divorce. "They were in the midst of making what they hoped would be a dream home."

The burnt-out houses that were being converted into one and (below) twins Marie and Celia with two-month-old Katrina, who were among the victims of the fire



Police admit cameras would not have identified bombers

By WILLIAM CASE

ONLY a tiny proportion of security cameras in airports and railway stations are effectively monitored and likely to identify terrorists, security experts said yesterday.

London Transport Police yesterday admitted that even if its surveillance cameras had been recording at Victoria Station, vital clues to the identity of whoever planted the bomb would probably have been lost because the system chosen was incapable of continuous recording.

"The cameras were installed simply for crime control, such as football hooliganism, pickpocketing and drug dealing, and never designed to give blanket coverage of the station," a spokesman said.

Victoria station is monitored in a small control room

inside the transport police's Victoria headquarters, a quarter of a mile along the side of the railway track, in which a single officer watches five small colour screens. In spite of having 26 cameras, only one can be recorded at any time.

Patrick Rabbitts, secretary of the International Professional Security Association, said that random monitoring of a few screens was a waste of public money and that legislation should be introduced to ensure that cameras watching public places at risk should record continuously.

"It is absolutely essential in the context of terrorism, especially when so many people doing the monitoring have no proper training," he said. "They are made to work long

shifts in which concentration is impossible. You need a break every 20 minutes."

The London Transport Police spokesman said that shifts of eight hours were normal for control room officers and that, although training was given, there were not enough police to ensure that over 1,000 cameras installed at London Underground and mainline stations could be effectively monitored. "We are reviewing the situation, although in the end it all comes down to cost."

Once continuous record security systems are installed, however, they are cheap to monitor as tapes can be re-used and re-played only when a specific incident occurs. A spokesman for Vidionics, the Worcester-based security firm that installed the cameras at Victoria station, said that they could have provided police with a continuous record system.

Ian Seward, a designer for Amstrad, in Brentwood, Essex, which makes a £399 video recorder capable of continuously recording for 20 hours, said that although designed for home use the machine could be linked easily to security cameras. Enquiries had been received from security firms overseas but none from authorities in Britain.

Benefit rule dismays disabled

By JILL SHERMAN
SOCIAL SERVICES
CORRESPONDENT

THE Court of Appeal yesterday overturned a social security commissioner's decision that the government had been unlawfully restricting benefit to the disabled.

The ruling that the government was allowed to "revolve the goal post" in deciding who is eligible for benefit will dash the hopes of 400,000 disabled people who might have shared a £75 million payout.

In a test case last year the commissioner decided that Rosaleen Foster, aged 19, from the Wirral, who suffers from cerebral palsy, was entitled to severe disability premiums worth £28.20 a week in addition to allowances for severe disablement, attendance and mobility and income support.

The decision yesterday in favour of Tony Newton, social security secretary, was described by Miss Foster's legal advisers as a severe blow against the disabled. The Disability Alliance said that it was shocked and disappointed at the decision, which would leave many disabled people living in poverty.

The appeal judges refused Miss Foster leave to appeal to the House of Lords but her advisers said that they would be considering applying direct to the law lords for consent to appeal.

Government subsidies for the rich match the benefit it allocates to the poor, the Child Poverty Action Group claimed yesterday. It urged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to introduce a fairer tax system in the budget to protect the interests of children and low-income families.

Terrorism acts 'a shambles'

By RICHARD FORD
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ATTEMPTS by the government to restrain the financing of terrorism were criticised yesterday as a "legislative shambles" that was likely to prove ineffective. A strongly worded attack by Lord Colville of Culross on the legislation also doubted whether ministers and officials had fully thought through special arrangements introduced to give the authorities powers to confiscate terrorist funds.

Lord Colville also rebuked some financial institutions in Northern Ireland for not co-operating with the police in providing information about clients' accounts when it was suspected funds were obtained through terrorist activity or were financing terrorism.

In the annual review of last year's operation of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1989, Lord Colville said the courts' powers to confiscate the proceeds of terrorist crime related only to some offences.

He said that in Northern Ireland some offences suitable for charging people were not scheduled and so could be tried by judge and jury. This could lead to intimidation of witnesses and jurors in offences related to tax, VAT and social security.

The various Acts appeared to be a legislative shambles and there were too many incongruities to set out in his report. Procedures under the Prevention of Terrorism Act to confiscate funds lacked teeth and it would be difficult to seize the proceeds of laundered money, he said.

The Home Office said a working party had been looking at some of the complex issues he had raised.

Enquiry as two die in police car chase

By PETER DAVENPORT

A SENIOR police officer working under the supervision of the Police Complaints Authority was yesterday appointed to investigate an incident in which two pedestrians were killed and two others seriously injured by a stolen car during a high-speed chase by a patrol vehicle.

Robert Cheetham, a lecturer aged 34, from the department of electronics and electrical engineering at Leeds university, and one of his students, Clare Robinson, aged 20, of Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, were killed instantly. Two other students - Robin Sangster, aged 30, from Nottinghamshire, and Peter Riecke, aged 20, from Berkshire - were injured. One of them was struck by the stolen Volkswagen sports car and run over by the police car.

The victims were among a group of seven walking home from a staff-student function at about 11.30 pm on Wednesday. They were crossing a road when the black Golf GTI car careened into them, followed by patrol car.

Eye-witnesses said that the stolen car had been travelling over 100mph, pursued by up to four police cars at one time. The stolen car was later found abandoned.

Ferry victory

Caledonian MacBrayne, the government-owned ferry company, last night dropped plans to introduce a Sunday ferry service from Harris in the Western Isles this summer after months of protests from islanders who said it would have been in breach of the Sabbath and would have destroyed their way of life. Sunday sailings had been planned between Tarbert, Harris, and Uig, Skye.

Rape case delay

The hearing before the Court of Appeal of a test case on whether a man can be convicted of raping his wife, due to start today, has been delayed until Wednesday. A man convicted at Leicester crown court and sentenced to three years' imprisonment against sentence. The hearing will lead to a new authoritative ruling on whether, as in Scotland, a man can be found guilty of raping his wife.

Poll tax test

The High Court yesterday reserved judgment on a test case to decide whether liability orders for unpaid poll tax can be made against individuals before their outstanding claims to rebates have been decided. The move follows a challenge by John Willman and Karl Young, both of Bristol, against Bristol council following liability orders made against them by city magistrates last November.

Royal demand

THE Prince of Wales called yesterday for aesthetic guidelines on planning decisions and suggested that the government should recognise and encourage the use of design guidelines "to stem the tide of unsympathetic, arrogant development". He was speaking at the Royal Town Planning Institute's awards in London, where he presented the top prize to Gateshead council for its innovative arts scheme.

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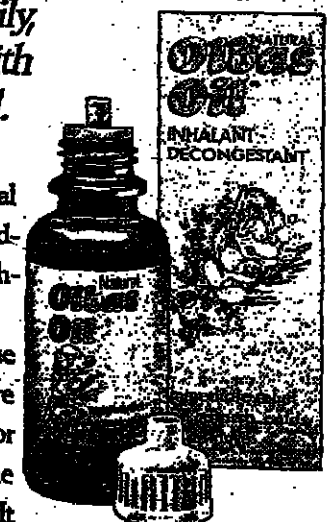
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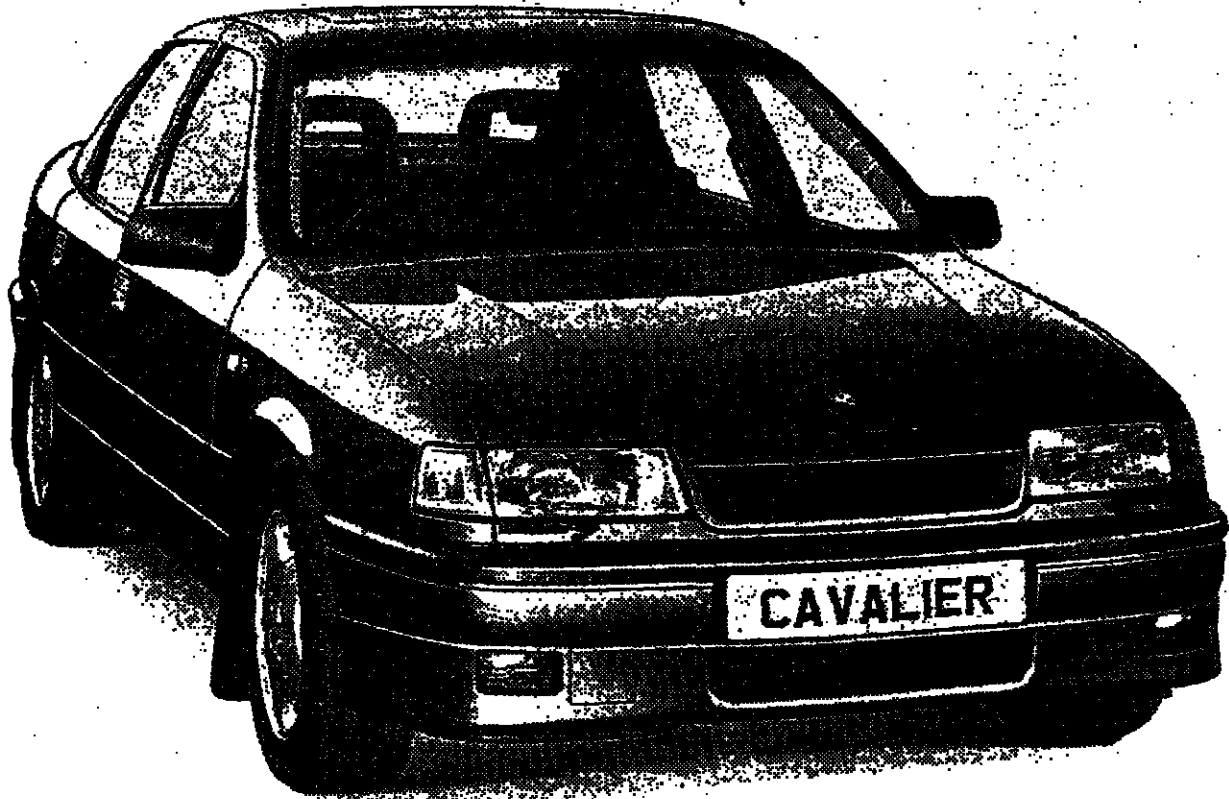
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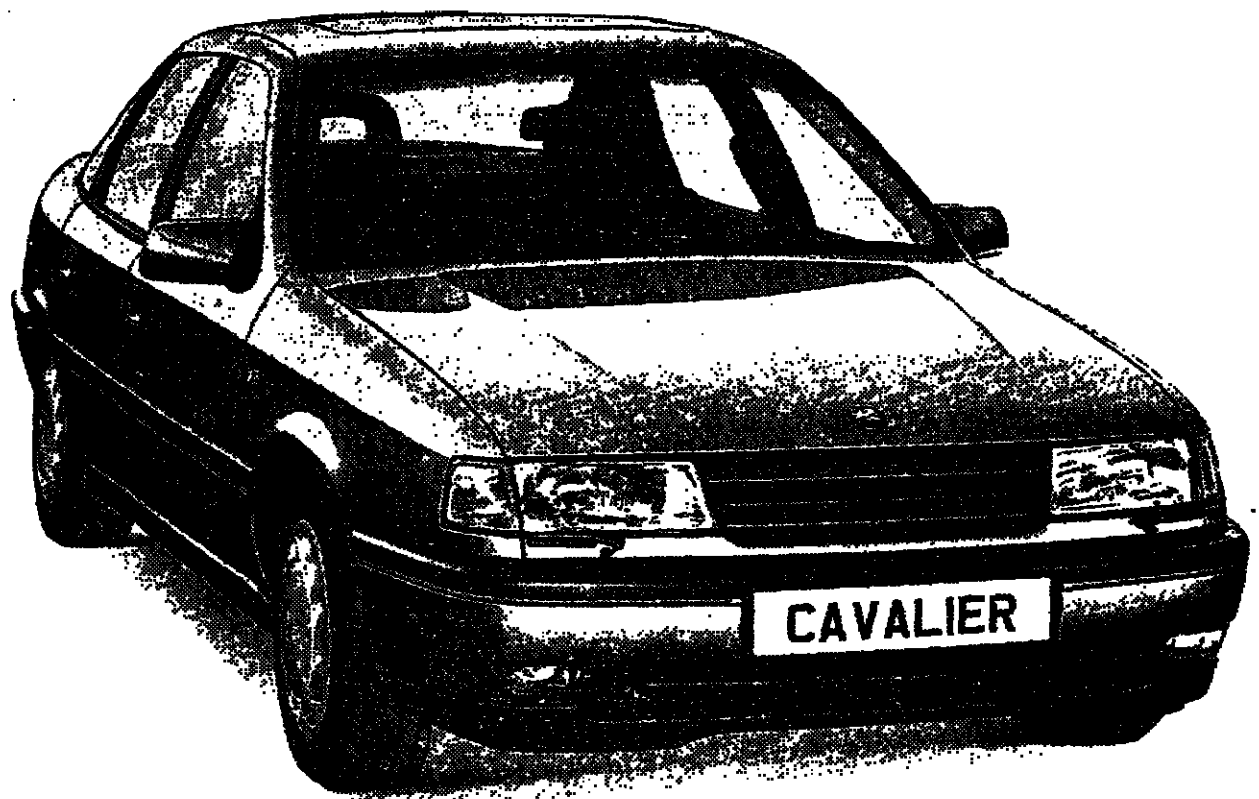


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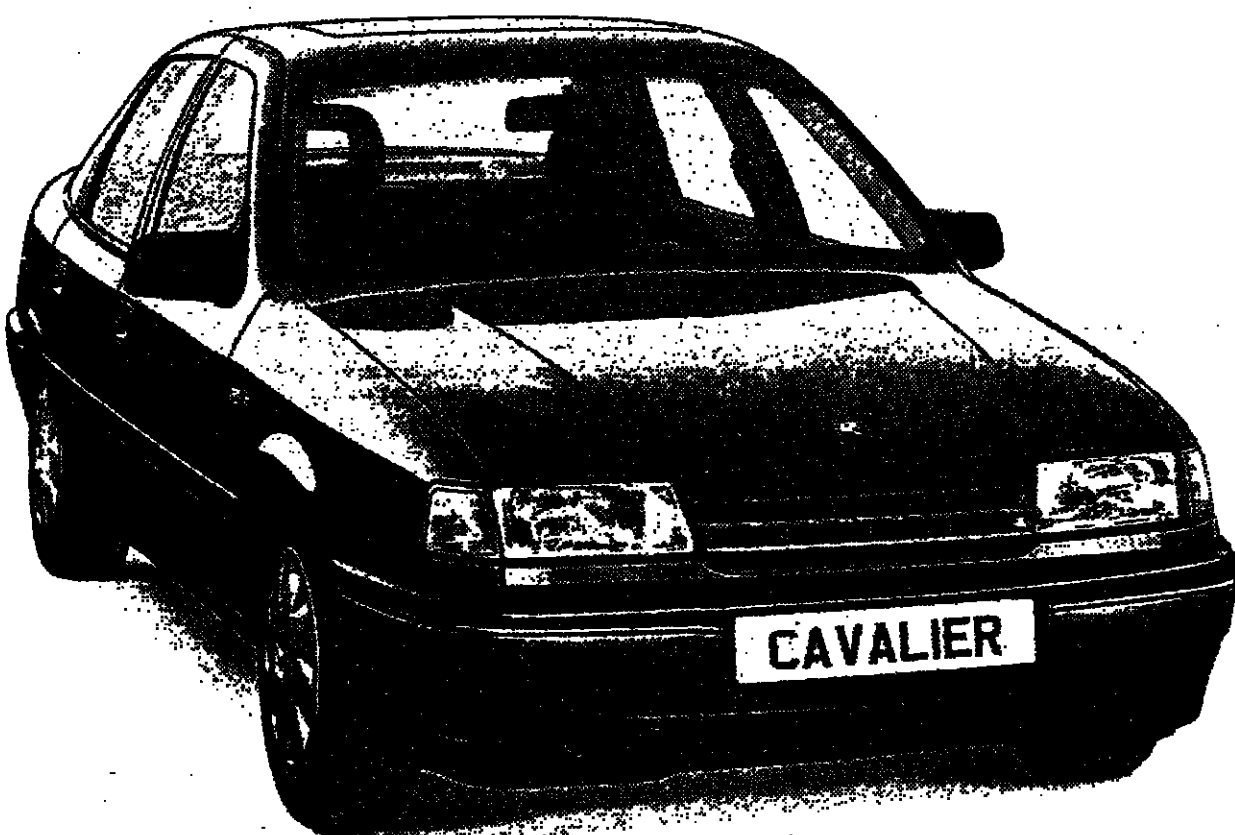
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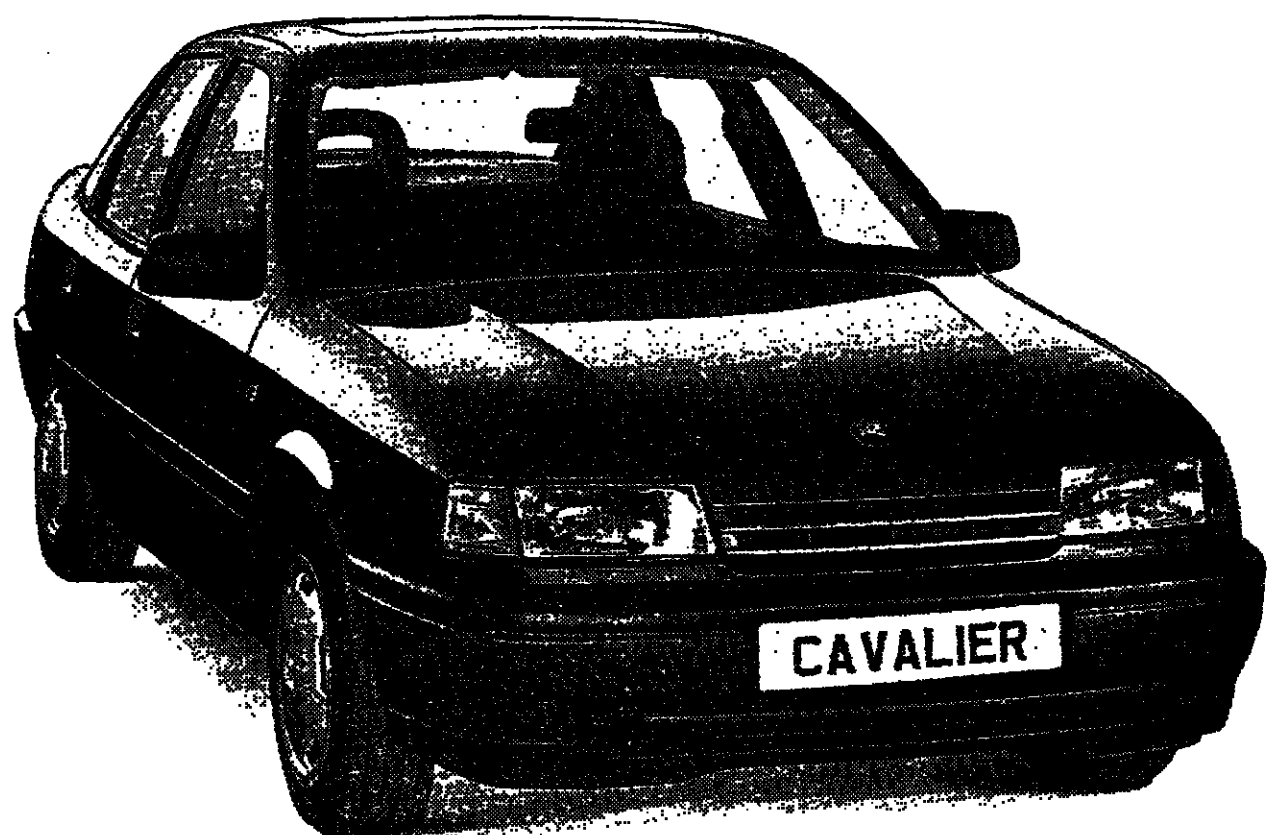
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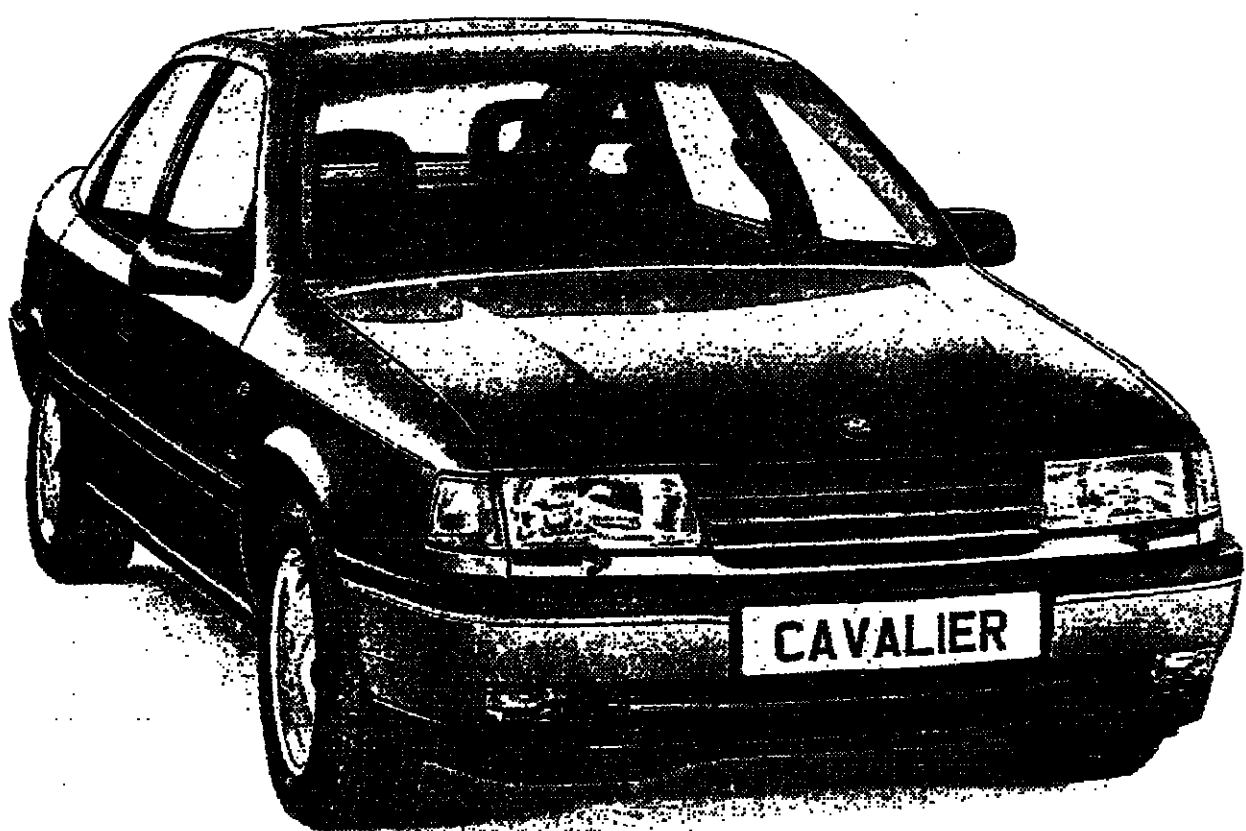
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'IRA man asked Dutch student to lure soldiers'

From MARK FULLER in ROERMOND, THE NETHERLANDS

A COURT in The Netherlands heard yesterday how an alleged member of the IRA tried to persuade a Dutch student to help to carry out attacks against off-duty British servicemen in the southern town of Roermond.

A statement by the 20-year-old student, Ingrid Heijman, was read out during the second day of the trial of four suspected members of the IRA. Donna Maguire, aged 25, Paul Hughes, aged 27, both from Newry, County Down, Gerard Harte, aged 27, from Lurgan, and Sean Hick, aged 30, from Dublin, are standing trial in connection with the murder last year of two Australians in Roermond. They have denied the charges.

The court also heard evidence linking the four to the murder of a British service-

man and his baby in Wildenrath, Germany, in October 1989. Police said the Kalashnikov rifle used in the Roermond attack was also used in the murder of Corporal Mahesh Kumar Islamia, aged 34, and his six-month-old daughter Ruthi.

The Dutch authorities have already granted extradition orders to Germany for Miss Maguire, Mr Hick and Mr Hughes in connection with attacks on British servicemen. However, they would first serve sentences in The Netherlands if found guilty.

Miss Heijman said she became a lover of the IRA member Martin Conlon, who is still at large, and that Mr Conlon introduced her to Mr Hick, with whom she also had a relationship. Miss Heijman said that Mr Conlon made no

secret of being an IRA member and had said his task was to collect information.

Shortly after the Wildenrath murder Mr Conlon asked Miss Heijman for her views on the attack. She said he then drew on a beer mat "how the shooting of the English soldier took place and how it should have taken place".

She said that on November 18, 1989, Mr Conlon took her to Roermond, where they had a drink in the King George public house, which was full of off-duty British servicemen from bases in Germany. She said Mr Conlon asked her "to pick up an English soldier to lure him to an alley where the IRA would be waiting to kill him". Miss Heijman said she would never do such a thing and Mr Conlon suggested a "less personal approach" by

placing a bag with a bomb in a cafe frequented by British servicemen. "I got very angry and slapped him in the face,"

Miss Heijman said Mr Conlon also asked her to hire a flat in The Hague which police allege was used as a safe house by the four suspects on trial and by Desmond Grew, an IRA member shot dead by the British Army last year.

Miss Heijman then described how on April 22, 1990, Mr Conlon introduced her to two men. One was called Jim, whom she has identified as Sean Hick, and she says the other was Mr Grew. After Mr Conlon's departure at the end of April, Miss Heijman became involved with Mr Hick. During a weekend at her flat near Amsterdam she said that Mr Hick, whom she assumed was also a member of the IRA, told her about the organisation's methods. "He said they are not good or helpful. But he said he had a feeling he must act" to stop people being killed and discriminated against in Northern Ireland. On May 20, 1990, Mr Hick introduced her to two friends called John and Mary, whom the student alleges were Mr Harte and Miss Maguire.

A statement by Vicki Coss, the girlfriend of Nick Spanos, one of the Roermond victims, said she was sitting with him in the car when she heard two volleys of shots. "I looked at Nick and could see a bullet had entered the top of his head. There was blood in his hair." Stephan Melrose was lying outside. "It seemed a bullet went through the side of his head... I started screaming."

The court was told that the Ministry of Justice had overruled Wednesday's decision to allow the suspects to associate freely. All four are being held in solitary confinement.

'Confession' in crumpled tape

By EDWARD GORMAN
IRISH AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

AN RUC constable described yesterday how he recovered the crumpled remains of an audio cassette tape on which a police informer in the IRA allegedly confessed to a Provisional interrogation squad.

The constable told Belfast crown court that he picked up the tape, large parts of which had been pulled from inside its plastic casing, after finding

it lying on the bathroom floor of a house in West Belfast.

The crown alleged that the tape had been used to record a confession by Alexander Joseph Lynch, who was being interrogated in the house when police and army arrived to rescue him.

The prosecution had claimed earlier that one interrogator was attempting to destroy the tape as the police arrived. However reconstitution of the cassette and a

transcription of the contents of the tape would show that Mr Lynch's voice could be heard describing his activities for RUC special branch, the money he received from them and a plea by him for mercy.

Danny Morrison, aged 38, the former national publicity director for Sinn Féin, and six other defendants deny falsely imprisoning Mr Lynch and conspiring with others to murder him. The hearing continues today.



Live wires: Alexander Watson, left, aged five, and brother Ashley, aged seven, study a model of trams in the Thirties, which will feature in a model railway exhibition at the Royal Horticultural Society's Halls, Westminster, London, from March 30

Warning for bomb hoaxers as prankster is jailed

By PAUL WILKINSON

AS THE first bomb hoaxer to be caught since the explosion at London's Victoria station on Monday was jailed for the maximum term of three months yesterday, other potential pranksters were warned that they face automatic prison sentences.

At Camberwell Green magistrates' court, in south London, an Irishman who had only recently arrived to work in Britain admitted making a call on Wednesday in which he claimed that there was a bomb at Lewisham British Rail station.

Patrick Feehan, aged 21, originally from Tipperary, said he had made the hoax call after being "rugged" at his job in a Brixton butchers' shop following the mainline station explosions on Monday.

Jailing him at the end of a five-minute hearing, Justin Phillips, the stipendiary magistrate, said: "You went out of your way to cause the maximum inconvenience to others. People who behave like you are a menace, and at the moment a scourge to those of us who want to go about our lawful activities without being inconvenienced."

"The public expect no mercy for those like you and you will get none from this court. ... I certify that this is an offence of gravity. Custody is inevitable for bomb hoaxers."

Feehan, dressed in a black bomber jacket with a leaping panther motif on the back, made no comment.

The court had heard how Feehan had used a telephone box in Brixton near his work to call Lewisham police. He said he believed there was a bomb scare at the station and had seen two men with carrier bags acting suspiciously. He repeated the message twice, by which time the call had been traced and he was arrested as he stood by the call box.

Tracing a hoax call can take just seconds on modern digital telephone exchanges. The recipient uses another line to contact the exchange, where an operator can display the caller's number and location on a console at the press of a button. The system works on all calls made within or between digital exchanges, which account for about half of all the lines in Britain.

On the older systems, which will all disappear in the next four years, it takes slightly longer as an engineer has to trace the call through the exchange equipment.

British Telecom and the police have agreed a set of procedures aimed at trapping calls from any unwanted source. Pointing to the number of hoax callers that have been caught since last Monday's explosions, it said: "People should be aware that the chances of being traced making a malicious call have greatly increased recently."

Cash priority for new Mersey chief

By RONALD FAUX

THE financial plight of Liverpool will come under scrutiny today at a meeting between Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, and Peter Bounds, the recently appointed chief executive of the city. At least 600 council jobs must go and a further £19 million of savings made if the council's books are to balance.

Mr Bounds was appointed after a two-year search for a chief executive with the administrative skill and personality to restore the battered image of Liverpool city council. His £86,000 salary puts him among the highest paid local government officers and is a measure of the task facing him. As one political moderate put it, the person responsible for running and promoting Liverpool is surrounded by a bed of ungrasped nettles.

Within the next few days Mr Bounds, aged 47, a former chief executive of Bolton, will present a management agenda to the council that will signal profound changes in the shape and style of the city's local government. Cuts in the 29,000 workforce and a rationalisation of the 22 council departments are inevitable.

Mr Bounds arrives with Liverpool's economy in tatters in spite of central funding to the Merseyside Development Corporation that has brought improvements to the waterfront and docks. Relations between politicians and the executive are in a trough, and the council has been threatened with control by the district auditor.

Only half of the city's community charge has been

collected. The town hall unions say that there is nothing new about the present position which creative accounting has not put right in the past; what has changed is the determination to end a stagnation that has frustrated Liverpool, even if it means compulsory redundancy and confrontation with the unions.

The £19 million gap between government limits and what the council expects to spend will be Mr Bounds's priority. He has a reputation for plain speaking and radical thought, one of the new breed of executives who take a commercial attitude to the job and who do not see local government as a sinecure.

"I tend to confront things straight on and say precisely what I believe should be done. I am keen to be the chief executive of a good, well-run local authority."

He does not blame any one decisive factor for Liverpool's plight: "There is just a bundle of contributory problems. Many believe government finance has not flowed to Liverpool in a volume that the problems here warrant."

Urban programme grants to the city have been cut by almost a quarter. The city's population has fallen by 50,000, or 10 per cent, while 50,000 jobs, 20 per cent of the city's total, have gone. Inner-city decay still infects Toxteth

and Granby, while unemployment at 16 per cent is higher than the northern average.

The city also finds it difficult to shake off a militant reputation unattractive to industry. Twenty-nine hard left councillors are denied the Labour whip for refusing to set a legal community charge or for refusing to vote for a rent rise.

Former councillors are also being investigated over deals involving council-owned land. The present moderate Labour council says money has poured into unselected centrally-funded agencies and not to the elected council.

Mr Bounds notes a plethora of bodies with a finger in the Merseyside pie and sees his job as co-ordinating that network effectively in promoting the city. He insists, however, that success will depend on the council. "I have no independent executive role. It will happen only if the council agrees. This is a fine city with a lot of development opportunities. I am very optimistic."

Study finds life saver

previously from heart attacks, angina, or strokes.

Sudden death before reaching hospital is the most common cause of death in patients with high blood pressure. Preventing it is important because a variety of treatments is available for those who survive long enough to reach hospital. The study is published in the February issue of the *American Journal of Hypertension*.

Beta blockers slow the heart rate, reducing the strain on the organ.

Non-hunters named

THE National Trust yesterday began a two-year enquiry into deer hunting on trust land, which members voted to ban at the annual general meeting three months ago (Michael McCarthy writes).

The enquiry is widely seen as a device to shelve a decision on the issue, which threatened to polarise the trust into pro and anti-hunting factions after a vote of less than 7 per cent of the two million membership.

The working party comprises five members of the trust's council, none of them

hunters, chaired by Professor Robert Savage, of Bristol University.

He will be assisted by Richard Steele, former director-general of the Nature Conservancy Council; Ruth Blok, trust council member nominated by the Council for the Protection of Rural England; Derek Pearce, a Norfolk farmer; and Stephen Ponder, a conservation officer in Walsall. They will go out into the West Country hunting field with staghound packs in the next few weeks.

Day of reckoning for first British astronaut

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

AFTER nearly two years of financial black holes, game show-style candidate selection and political infighting, the Juno mission will finally disclose today the name of the first British astronaut to go into space.

Yesterday it was announced that in May the first Irish astronaut will be selected to take part in a European Space Agency mission.

With Juno, which is based in the Soviet Union, Helen Sharman is widely tipped to win the seat from Major Timothy Mace of the Army Air Corps. The private mission has so far failed to attract sponsors but it is expected that organisers will plod through the rituals of keeping up the show-biz image that Juno once may have claimed to have. Miss Sharman, an attractive chocolate technologist, will certainly give the mission that image.

Juno, which was to have flown more than 20 British scientific experiments to the Mir space station, will carry none as a result of its funding difficulties. The mission's organiser, the Moscow Narodny Bank, was

continuing to insist yesterday that the search for television or company sponsors was not over.

Some British space experts blame the failure on world recession while others cite the difficulties of dealing with the bureaucracy which surrounds the Soviet space administration. Some are linking Juno's profit-making problems with Soviet cosmonauts' problems on the Mir space station last summer, when the crew were said to be close to freezing to death after insulation materials became dislodged. "What company wants its product to be linked with such potential dangers?" a British space technologist said yesterday.

The Juno experience is not unique. Western partnerships to exploit the Soviet Union's space technology have had disappointing results. Three years ago Jardine Glanville, a London-based arm of Jardine Matheson, the trading group, signed a well-publicised contract with Glavcosmos to market rocket launchers to western companies. The draw was a launch costing as little as £10 million — half the price

of Ariane, the French-dominated rival. Protests came from America amid claims that launches from the Soviet Union broke high technology embargoes on western technology. The Soviets offered to accept sealed payloads. Commercial rocket makers, including McDonnell Douglas, then claimed they were competing with a state-aided rival. The deal died without the sale of a single launcher.

Sigma Projects, the London company which in December 1989 secured the rights to market Soviet satellite pictures, has also apparently folded. David Baker, the space consultant behind the firm, was uncontactable yesterday but industry experts claim the project collapsed soon after launch.

Another scheme, Eclipse 90, which aimed to chase a total solar eclipse over the Siberian sea by a Concorde full of celebrity astronomers and television cameras, has also come to nothing. Space technologists are now claiming that these and other damped missions have turned Britain's space credentials in Moscow to mud.



Sharman: favourite to fly British flag in space

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Murder t

Musicians win

Label damages

Car hits owner

Public service salaries may rise 4% more than inflation

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

PUBLIC service salaries will rise ahead of inflation by more than 4 per cent this year, according to an authoritative forecast today, which also predicts that pay in the public services will be higher than pay in private industry.

The government wants to see lower pay settlements this year as the inflation rate falls, but the forecast by the Public Finance Foundation, an arm of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, suggests there is little likelihood of that being achieved even for the employees under its direct control.

PUBLIC SERVICE PAY

Forecast increases 1991-92

Armed forces*	15.3
Nurses*	9.8
Teachers*	9.8
Police	9.5
Local authority manuals	8.0
Town hall staff	7.5
Central government manuals	7.5
Civil service	8.0
NHS ancillaries/admin staff	7.5
Total weighted average	9.75

*Already fully settled
Source: Public Finance Foundation

Sadler's Wells faces grant cut

By SIMON TAIT
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

SADLER'S Wells theatre, which had hoped for a doubling of its Arts Council touring grant in the next financial year, is expected to receive just half of this year's allocation.

Instead of the £132,000 the theatre had wanted, the council's touring panel is expected next month to recommend a grant of £30,000, compared with £54,000 for the present financial year.

Stephen Remington, director of Sadler's Wells, said: "This is a very serious disappointment but there is time before the Arts Council meets to talk to members and officials. I believe the door is still to be opened."

The terms of the new grant require the appearance of at least two foreign companies at Sadler's Wells and for there to be at least three touring venues outside London.

"This is a great challenge but it is something we have tried before with little success," Mr Remington said. "What we bring tends to be close to the creative knife-edge and regional theatres tend to be reluctant to take a risk."

The Royal Shakespeare Company returns to London on March 3 with *The War That Still Goes On*, at the Young Vic. The play discusses the relevance of the works of the Greek writer Thucydides to the Gulf war. Performances will be followed by debates between politicians and academics.

Murder trial halted

The jury in the trial of a man accused of murdering a wealthy businessman's wife nine years ago was discharged yesterday in the interest of a fair trial. Keith Rose, aged 40, of Coplestone, Exeter, had pleaded not guilty at Exeter crown court to murdering Mrs Juliet Rowe, aged 42, at her home in Budleigh Salterton, Devon.

Mr Justice Ognall said that certain matters had been brought to his attention which made it clear that it would be improper for the jury to continue trying the case. He said the trial would recommence on Monday with a new jury.

Musicians win

Evelyn Glennie, the profoundly deaf virtuoso percussionist, last night won the Royal Philharmonic/Charles Heidsieck award as solo performer of 1990. English National Opera's orchestra was the large ensemble of the year, and Andrew Davis, of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, was conductor of the year.

Libel damages

Jenny Seagrove, the actress, and her lover Michael Winner, the film director, won undisclosed libel damages from the High Court yesterday from the now defunct *Sunday Correspondent* newspaper over allegations that he was "kinky" and that she was only after his money.

Car hits owner

Richard Weston, of Nottingham, was hit, but not badly hurt, by his own car just after reporting it stolen to police. He saw the car at traffic lights, stood in front of it, but was hit as it sped off.

pay in the public services — mainly civil and local government, education, the health service and the armed forces — will rise by an average of 9.75 per cent in the year from April. Using an average inflation forecast of 5.5 per cent, in line with the Treasury's estimate of the likely inflation rate by the autumn, the foundation says this means in real terms a pay increase after inflation of 4.75 per cent. Such a rise is higher than for every year in the past decade, apart from 1986-87 and 1987-88.

The foundation's forecast is based on analysis of current pay commitments. Chris Trinder, a foundation senior research fellow, said that almost half of the public service pay figures are known for 1991-92. The foundation says that the only unclear point is take-home pay, which will be determined by decisions on income tax in the Budget on March 19. The forecasts show that the armed forces are likely to receive most, followed by nurses, teachers, the police, and civil servants.

Public service pay increases are likely to be 2.25 percentage points above pay rises in the private sector, which the foundation says are likely to fall as inflation falls, but are unlikely to dip much below 7.5 per cent.

The foundation says that this catch-up in public service pay follows three successive years of private sector salaries rising faster than those in the public services. It notes that such adjustments usually occur around the time of general elections, but also reflect that public service pay rates eventually have to come into line with market pay rates if staff are to be recruited and retained, morale maintained and strikes avoided.

Leaders of more than 700,000 local authority employees will be told today that they have no chance of achieving their objective of up to 15 per cent pay rises (Tim Jones writes).

The warning, to be given by Sir Jack Layden, chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities when he addresses its personnel conference, is the clearest signal yet to the unions that town halls will be prepared to shut down rather than concede a demand that would add considerably to a salary bill running at just under £8 billion.

Confidential papers discussed by a committee of the Association of District Councils show that employers are prepared to sit out a strike rather than concede any pay rise demand above inflation.

Another confidential paper prepared by Lacsab, the local authorities' employers' organisation, says the demand for a 35-hour week by the main union concerned, the National and Local Government Officers' Association, must be resisted. Nalga says a large proportion of its members in town halls earn less than the £9,000 Council of Europe decency threshold.

Stoner jailed

Daniel Attwood, of Peterborough, who threw stones at police during a poll tax demonstration in Brixton, south London, last October, was jailed for a year by the Central Criminal Court.

Inquests open

Inquests on a sister and brother who drowned in a frozen pond at Gunnersbury, West London, last Sunday were opened yesterday.

Oil spill risks

Congestion in British sea lanes is increasing the risk of serious oil or chemical spillages, the National Audit Office says today.

Guard shot

A security guard was shot in the leg by raiders who took £25,000 from a Security Express van delivering cash to a bank in Guildford, Surrey.

On the board

After three ballots, Pickering Conservative club, North Yorkshire, is to let lady members form a darts team.



Foreign fields: Spanish navel, French apples and American grapefruit, apples and pears dominate a market stall in Walworth, south London

Home producers losing the battle for fruit

SUPERMARKET shelves are overflowing with a greater variety of foodstuffs than ever before, but British producers appear to be losing the battle to supply this market against competitors in other European Community countries with similar climates.

Figures released this week by Food from Britain, the agency set up in 1984 to boost sales of British produce, show that the trade gap on food and drink widened by 9 per cent last year to reach £5.1 billion. The statistics need to be put in a historical context.

Successive governments relied on cheap food imports until the second world war when boosting domestic production became a matter of national survival. Britain, which was dependent on imports for two-thirds of its food needs in 1940, now produces 60 per cent of all the food it

Imports of fruit and vegetables rose last year by £238 million. Michael Hornsby finds out why

consumes and 75 per cent of food that can be grown in a northern climate.

Since 1980, however, the drive to reduce the food and drink deficit has stalled. Expressed in 1990 prices, the gap has remained fairly constant at about £5 billion. What is worrying is that within that overall figure there has been a sharp worsening in the farm trade balance with five northern European countries all of which have similar climates to Britain's.

Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland and The Netherlands account for more than half the deficit.

Britain is now the biggest market for German wine and sausages and the second biggest market for German cheese and beer. While there may be sound reasons for the rapid increase in imports of German wine, it is harder to see why British beer, cheese and sausage manufacturers should have allowed their German counterparts to make such inroads.

The dairy counter of most supermarkets tells a similar tale. Too often the British offerings will be limited to little more than rows of cheddar sweating in see-through plastic alongside attractively packaged displays of items whose very names betray their non-British origin: *fromage blanc*, *fromage frais*, *fromage battu*, *petit suisse*.

Of the total increase in food and drink imports last year of £808 million, fruit and vegetables accounted for £238 million. Although

30 per cent of this increase was accounted for by bananas, citrus and other non-indigenous fruits, 26 per cent was due to increased imports of apples and pears.

"Last year we imported £330 million of tomatoes, mainly from Holland, and exported only £6 million. Exports of bacon and smoked meats totalled £11 million against imports of £540 million, mainly from Holland and Denmark. We imported 448,000 tonnes of apples, but exported only 25,000 tonnes," Sandy Livingstone, of Food from Britain, said.

Paul Hight-Smith, for Gateway supermarkets, said: "We are all eager to buy more from home companies, but too often there is a lack of consistency as regards supply, quality and price. The weakness of farmers' marketing co-operatives in Britain is a big factor."

Court to decide fate of chalice

THE fate of a 16th century silver chalice is to be decided by an ecclesiastical court (Ruth Gledhill writes).

The Worshipful Nigel Seed, chancellor of the Leicester diocese, will judge whether the £250,000 chalice may be sold to finance repairs to the 14th century St Mary's church, Wymeswold. The chalice is a rare example of a pre-

Reformation piece with a 1512 hallmark.

The Rev Leslie Robinson, rector, and the parochial church council have petitioned the chancellor for permission to sell the chalice.

Objections to their proposal are being sent to the chancellor, who hopes to hold a court hearing later this year. The church, which needs

roof repairs costing £75,000, remains shut, with a closure notice pinned to its door by Mr Robinson, who says it is unsafe.

The chancellor said that there would be a formal hearing of the diocesan court in the parish. "I decide whether or not it will be sold. The trial could take anything from a day to a week."

Low cost of preserving nature

A THRIVING population of wild pheasants and partridges could be ensured for only a fraction of the cost of paying farmers not to grow crops, according to Dick Potts, who takes over next month as director of the Game Conservancy (John Young writes).

Last year 135 farmers agreed to establish conservation headlands, strips along

the edges of fields which are not sprayed to encourage wildflowers and insects. A further 221 want to join but claim that they cannot afford to do so because of low returns on cereal crops.

In the latest issue of the conservancy newsletter Dr Potts estimates that an annual grant of about £3 million over seven years would enable

enough game chicks to survive to meet its targets. That is less than a tenth of the amount expected to be paid next season to farmers who agree to leave land fallow under the government's set-aside scheme, which, he argues, is damaging wildlife because farmers are using more pesticides elsewhere in order to increase yields.



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Labour to consider reliefs limit and 50% top income tax rate

By ROBIN OAKLEY
POLITICAL EDITOR

A LABOUR government will introduce a tax system that is fair, simple and cheap to administer and economically efficient, Neil Kinnock said last night.

To that end Labour will consider setting a cash limit to the reliefs that any one taxpayer can claim or it will follow the American example of setting a "minimum tax". That would be calculated on the basis of income before reliefs and therefore would prevent avoidance by those on very high incomes, Mr Kinnock

said: "The principle of requiring that all pay something should not be unfamiliar to the Conservative party".

In a speech at Manchester airport, the Labour leader said that Labour would reorganise government accounting to distinguish between investment and consumption. It would be willing to borrow to cover investment but not for consumption. It would "only borrow to finance capital projects if they yield a rate of return higher than the rate of interest paid on the borrowing".

He confirmed that his party would abolish the poll tax, add-

ing: "It is not at all unreasonable or excessive for top rates of income tax to rise to 50 per cent, a level lower than top rates in all the major EC countries. In Germany it is 56 per cent. In France it is 58.8 per cent. In Italy it is 62 per cent."

The upper earnings limit on national insurance contributions was unfair, a family with one earner on £40,000 paying £1,625 while a family with two earners on £20,000 each paid 9 per cent each on their entire income, at a cost of £3,650. Labour would abolish the limit and then "look at the whole structure of income tax and national insurance contributions in order to establish new tax bands which create a fairer and more efficient structure".

The Labour leader promised a review of "all the tax breaks and loopholes which the Tories have created". But while he criticised the Business Expansion Scheme and its use to provide tax relief for real estate deals, he talked of change rather than abolition. Labour would build in its own loopholes, for example allowing companies to reduce their corporation tax by spending on training or research.

Saying that uncollected tax amounted to £5 billion a year, worth 3p on the standard rate of income tax, Mr Kinnock said that improved staffing for the Inland Revenue would be cost efficient.

Emphasising the need for efficiency in the raising and spending of money, Mr Kinnock said that it was wrong to tackle spending in the autumn statement and taxation in the Budget. Labour would use the autumn statement to open up economic debate and spell out options. "Then at Budget time the content of taxation and spending should be determined together."

Mr Kinnock also underlined the degree of Labour's conversion to the need for wealth creation. He said: "The benefits of tax-financed expenditure for essential public services are obvious to anyone who compares the cost of our health service with the American health system... But equally there is no doubt that taxation at the wrong levels and in the wrong places can damage economic efficiency. Excessively high taxation can encourage evasion. That is why Labour favours an approach in which moderate tax rates are applied to a wide tax base, as opposed to [applying] very high taxes to a few activities."

Saddam overthrow not a war aim, Hogg tells House

By OUR PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

GULF WAR

THE government sought last night to allay concern that its war aims in the Gulf had been widened to include the overthrow of President Saddam Hussein or the occupation of Iraq.

Douglas Hogg, minister of state at the foreign office, speaking in a Commons debate, said: "While we would not grieve if Saddam Hussein was induced to stand aside or otherwise ceases to be leader of Iraq, it is not part of our purpose to change the Iraqi system of government or select its leader for it."

Pressed on the issue, he emphasised that it was not an allied objective to occupy Iraq "save in the process of expelling Iraqi forces from Kuwait".

He also replied to concern that this view was shared by the Americans, saying: "What is true of this country is true of other countries within the coalition as well."

Questioned about the Soviet peace proposals, he said that, welcome though they were, they did not ensure full compliance with the security

be struck against Iraqi targets in Kuwait and Iraq, but the destruction of the Iraqi army was not itself a war aim. "That may happen in the course of the campaign, but it is not itself a specific war objective."

He said that the international community required an unequivocal commitment by Iraq to withdraw its forces fully and unconditionally from Kuwait.

"When the Iraqi government is ready to comply with the mandatory resolutions of the security council they should say so unambiguously and match their words with decisive and irreversible proof. There needs to be clear evidence of withdrawal and there must be repatriation of allied prisoners of war. As yet, there has been no such statement. There is no such proof and we have seen no such evidence. Accordingly, hostilities will continue."

He made clear that after the war Britain was willing to play a part in underpinning arrangements that the Gulf states and other regional powers might devise, but the concepts, proposal and the principal effort must come from within the region.

Britain's commitment would inevitably be modest. It could be a naval presence, training or joint exercises, but the government would not consider stationing British ground troops in the area or a return to the pre-1971 East of Suez role. That would not be in the long-term interests of the region.

When the conflict was ended, they needed to return with yet greater vigour to efforts to resolve the wider issues, standing on the principles of the Palestinians' right to determine their political future and the right of Israel to live within secure and accepted frontiers.

"In the absence of a settlement, the Middle East will remain unstable. We have a duty and an interest in solving this problem."

James Sillars, opening the debate for the Scottish National Party, expressed concern about the war aims creeping forward beyond the objectives set out in the UN resolutions and said that they were not "paper flags of convenience" to be discarded.

He quoted Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, as saying that there was no "hidden agenda" but asked if one had now emerged: the aim of bringing down Saddam's regime.

He had no doubt this would be extremely popular among the public, but that would go well beyond the terms of the security council resolutions.

He said: "It is our duty not to be carried away by the fervour or opportunity presented by war but to think carefully of the consequences of our actions. I beg the government to make the Americans understand the delicacy and sensitivity of the Arab people in the wake of an Iraqi retreat of Iraqi defeat."

George Robertson, for the Labour party, said that after Saddam's speech it was a sombre day throughout the world. If he did not intend to



Sillars: do not be carried away by opportunity

withdraw from Kuwait unconditionally, any decision to start a land assault would have been taken, not by the allies, but by Saddam himself.

There was still no evidence that the signal given by Iraq last Friday was anything more than a device to avoid the extension of the punishment of Iraq. For the sake of the wider peace of the world they must hope that President Gorbachev's brave and imaginative initiative would appeal to the Iraqis.

Sir David Steel, Liberal Democrat spokesman on foreign affairs, said that Iraqi civilian casualties were regrettable but an inevitable consequence of war. However,

Heseltine plan 'threatens family stability'

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL Heseltine's plan to replace the community charge with a property tax adjusted for the number of people living in a household was attacked by the Labour party yesterday as a recipe for family break-up.

Bryan Gould, the shadow environment secretary, said that the reported proposal to ask the head of household to collect the tax from others living there meant parents would be given an incentive to encourage children to move out once they were 18 and carers looking after elderly or infirm relatives would be charged for relieving the state of expenditure on community care.

Mr Gould said at a press conference at Westminster that the proposal to base the new tax on floor space had been opposed by experts contributing to the government's review.

He said they had advised that such a tax would be flawed fundamentally because it overlooked key factors affecting the value of a property such as age, state of repair, maintenance costs, structural soundness and location. It made distinction between types of property impossible so that a valid comparison between the value of a detached and terraced house was lost; it would also tend to discriminate against larger families and it would make it difficult for the authorities to deal with extensions to properties.

Mr Gould said: "Michael Heseltine's proposed bed and breakfast tax is in danger of making him a laughing stock. I used to think it was impossible to come up with a tax worse than the poll tax. But I

must admit that Michael Heseltine has confounded me. He has managed to come up with two taxes which in combination are worse than the poll tax."

In the Commons, John Major was questioned about the review. He praised Westminster city council for setting a community charge of £176, almost £20 less than that for last year. He said that he hoped other authorities would follow its example.

Boundary revision

THE Boundary Commission for England, which defines the parliamentary constituencies, announced yesterday that it is to start its periodic review. The last review was implemented in 1983 and involved not only changes to boundaries but also to the names of hundreds of seats.

John Biffen, the former leader of the House, was among those to criticise the choice of names. MPs and other found difficulty identifying the location of many seats. The commission is required to carry out a review every 10 to 15 years and the home secretary is required to act on its recommendations, which have to be approved by Parliament.

The commission usually seeks to ensure that each constituency has roughly the same number of voters and that constituency boundaries coincide if possible with local authority boundaries.

Councils are owed £360m in rent

Local authorities in England were owed about £360 million in rent arrears at the end of the last financial year, about 7.8 per cent of the rent collectable, Sir George Young, the housing and planning minister, said in a written reply.

Ten authorities, nine of them in London, with the worst record for collecting 37 per cent of the total outstanding. The London borough of Brent had the worst record, with about 45 per cent of its rent owing.

Woolf report

Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, intends to make a Commons statement next week on the Woolf inquiry report on the Strangeways prison riot. John MacGregor, leader of the House, said that he would see if the statement could be made on Monday before MPs conclude their debates on the Criminal Justice bill.

Parliament next week

The main Commons business next week will be: Monday: Criminal Justice bill, conclusion of remaining stages. Tuesday: Road Traffic bill, remaining stages. Wednesday: Motions on social security benefit increases. Thursday: Debate on Welsh affairs. Friday: Private members' bills.

The main business in the Lords will be: Monday: Child Support bill, second reading. Tuesday: Ministerial and Other Salaries and Pensions bill and Disability Living Allowance and Disability Working Allowance bill, second readings. Debate on part-time and temporary employment. Wednesday: Debate on local government. Thursday: Planning and Compensation bill, third reading. Motions on social security benefit increases.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Private members' bills: Courts (Research) bill and Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) bill, second readings.



Sir David Steel: concern over US views

council resolutions. On Saddam's speech earlier in the day, Mr Hogg said: "It did not sound like the speech of a man who was about unconditionally and irrevocably to comply with the resolutions of the security council."

He repeated the objectives of the war - full and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait; restoration of the legitimate government there; restoration of peace and security in the region; and acceptance by Iraq of the authority of the security council and its decisions.

"We have no other objectives," he said. "We do not intend to occupy Iraq. We do not intend to change its borders. We do not wish the destruction of its economy."

He made clear that "heavy and telling blows" needed to

Parliament seriously misled about final terms

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LORD Young of Grafton, the former trade and industry secretary, and his officials were censured yesterday by the Conservative-dominated Commons trade and industry committee for failing to disclose full details to Parliament and the European Commission of the sale of Rover to British Aerospace.

After a two-and-a-half year enquiry to unearth the true cost of the deal, the MPs found that Parliament was seriously misled about the full and final terms. The committee concluded that British Aerospace bought the Rover Group for £150 million in exchange for £610 million of public money.

Most of the committee did

not condemn the sale, described by Lord Young as the deal of the century, but complained that it became soured by the failure of Lord Young and his officials to disclose all the details. "Given the detailed negotiations which had taken place since March 1988, it was wrong to withhold the details of the final package from the House in the statements made on July 14, 1988," the report said. Lord Young's statement to the Lords on July 14, on regional aid assistance, was also "not strictly true", it added.

The deal was put at risk in 1988 when the European Commission cut the government's proposed state aid to BAE from £800 million to £547 million. During July 1988 Lord Young granted the BAE chairman Roland Smith additional "sweeteners" to salvage the deal. The European Commission ruled later that £44.4 million of the extra subsidies were illegal and ordered BAE to repay them. BAE is challenging the decision in the European Court of Justice.

The main "sweeteners" were the deferment of the £150 million purchase price until late March, repayment of Rover's £1.5 million privatisation costs and reimbursement of BAE's purchase of minority shareholdings of £9.5 million.

The committee concluded that Lord Young did not disclose the full terms because he feared, probably wrongly, that the Commission would not approve them. Most of the committee believe that all the "sweeteners" have now come to light, but the Commons public accounts committee is still investigating tax concessions given to BAE.

The final report was approved unanimously, although at its launch at Westminster yesterday three Tory MPs, James Cran, Sir Anthony Grant and Barry Porter, distanced themselves from the censure of Lord Young and his officials. The report disclosed the months of divisions and votes within the cross-party committee over the strength of the criticism. The approved version plainly disclosed the MPs' anger at the trade department's reluctance to give them all the details of the sale.

The report concluded: "We do not accept that the trade and industry department behaved correctly in respect of the European Commission in this matter. If the elements in the special financial package did not constitute state aid but were essential for the deal which was eventually struck, there was no reason for them to be withheld from the Com-

Rover sale to British Aerospace



Lord Young: strongly censured by committee

mission. Even if there was a danger that the Commission could construe them, or some of them, as state aids, it was wrong to withhold that information from the Commission. Such an omission is unacceptable and weakens the government's position in arguing for greater transparency in competition policy. We believe that the secretary of state [Lord Young] should have told the full story to the chairman of a public company suggesting options for keeping

information from the Commission and Parliament."

While the MPs said that BAE negotiated with great skill and drove a hard bargain, Lord Young's hand was weakened by the decision to give the company exclusive negotiating rights for Rover. The committee could not discover who first proposed the "sweeteners" because of conflicting evidence, but concluded that they might not have proved crucial to close the deal.

The committee also questioned the eight meetings held between Inland Revenue officials and BAE. "We were amazed to discover that the Inland Revenue officials kept no complete records of the meetings they attended. Given the sums of money at stake, the complexity of the issues involved and their sensitivity, this seems to us very strange and unacceptable."

House of Commons trade and industry committee first report: *Sale of Rover Group to British Aerospace* (Stationery Office, £9.60).

Leading article, page 15
Road to recovery, page 25

How the negotiations happened

- February 1986: Government starts talks with Ford and General Motors on privatisation of the then British Leyland group. MPs object to possible sale of Land Rover and Leyland Trucks to General Motors.
- February-March 1987: Leyland trucks and bus divisions sold off.
- March 1, 1988: Lord Young of Grafton, trade and industry secretary, gives British Aerospace (BAE) exclusive negotiating rights over Rover Group.
- March 29: Lord Young agrees to sell Rover to BAE for £150 million if government wipes off debts of £800 million.
- June: European Commission cuts government injection from £800 million to £547 million.
- July 12-13: Further talks between Lord Young and BAE chairman, Roland Smith, to close the gap. Lord Young tells Lords that EC has approved final terms after "certain

changes in the structure and scale of the March agreement."

July 14: Deal concluded and reported to both Houses of Parliament.

November 29, 1989: National Audit Office, the public spending watchdog, reports the discovery of £38 million undisclosed "sweeteners" given to BAE during the final sale negotiations.

December: European Commission opens enquiry into extra subsidies.

March 31, 1990: BAE pays the government the £150 million agreed purchase price for Rover.

June 27: EC rules that extra subsidies were illegal and orders BAE to repay the government £44.4 million. Government announces broad acceptance of decision.

July 25: BAE says it will challenge the ruling in European Court of Justice.

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Hu cajo twin

DOUGLAS HURD, the foreign secretary, is the only member of the cabinet who has not been in the House of Commons for more than 10 years. He was elected in 1979, but lost his seat in 1983. He was re-elected in 1987, but lost it again in 1990. He is now a member of the House of Lords.

Croatia follows Slovenia route

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Fault shuts down nuclear reactor

DAVID WATSON, the energy secretary, is the only member of the cabinet who has not been in the House of Commons for more than 10 years. He was elected in 1979, but lost his seat in 1983. He was re-elected in 1987, but lost it again in 1990. He is now a member of the House of Lords.

Airport demand

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Mafia chief free

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Ministers go

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Reform attacked

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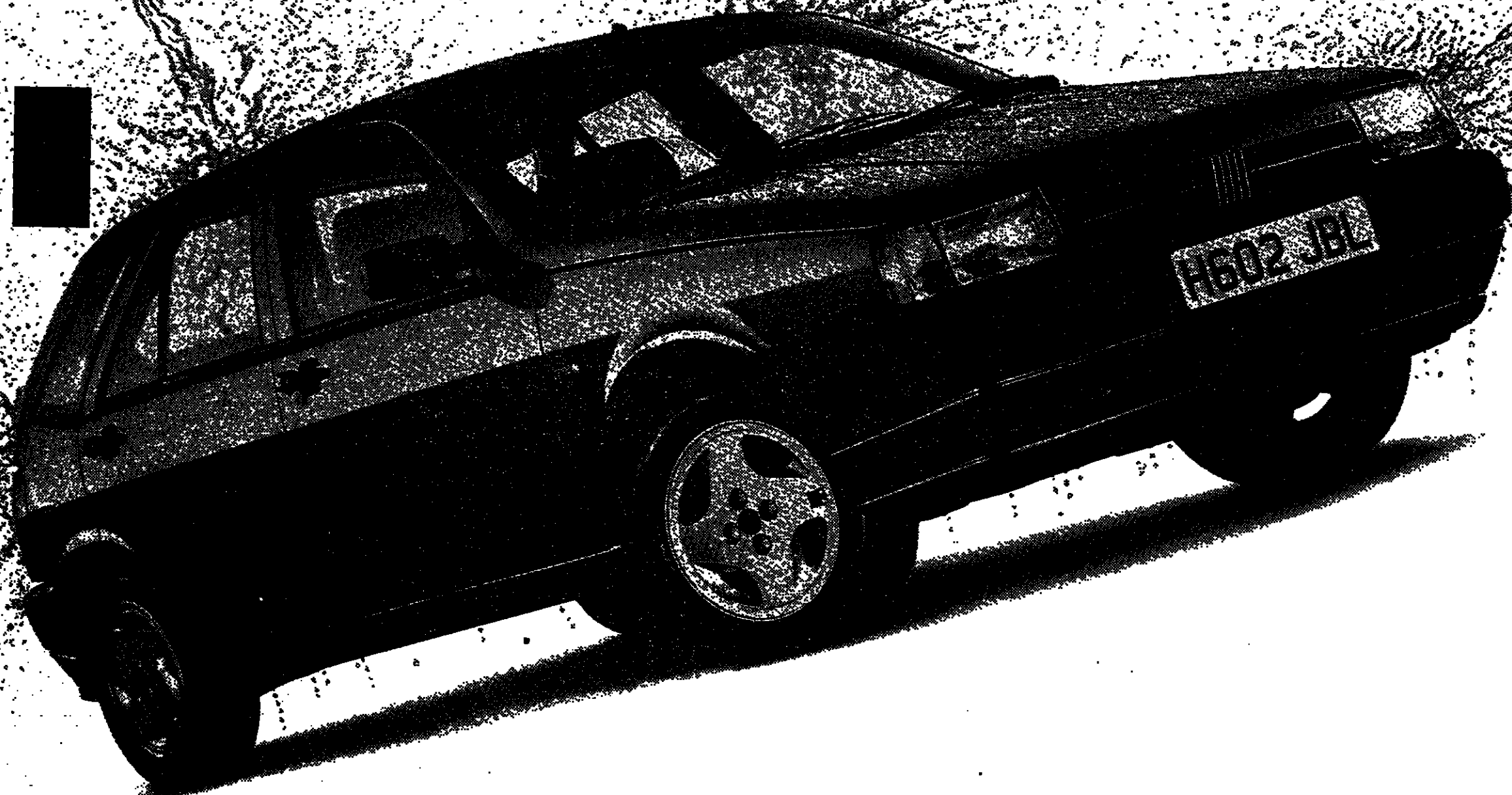
Beef over buffalo

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Apologies for apartheid split Pretoria party

From GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

ALTHOUGH the ruling National party in South Africa is dismantling apartheid, it is divided over whether to apologise to its victims. Fractious debates in parliament this week have highlighted the moral dilemma of white politicians called upon to slay the monster their party created.

After months of evasive and half-hearted responses, a government minister discomfited some colleagues by offering a forthright *mea culpa* — while another resisted demands for his resignation over the murderous activities of a clandestine military unit.

"Apartheid was a terrible mistake that blighted our land," Leon Wessels, the deputy foreign minister, said in the white House of Assembly. "With the benefit of hindsight, we now know that we have hurt our fellow countrymen. The only manner to build our joint future is if we are brutally, bluntly frank and honest about the past."

Glen Babb, a former senior official in the foreign ministry, balked at making a similar apology. The National party

could make amends for what had happened without resorting to an open confession.

Magnus Malan, the defence minister, is clearly in no mood to apologise for the behaviour of the so-called Civil Cooperation Bureau, a branch of special military forces that was condemned by a judicial commission last year for its involvement in murder and bomb attacks.

Disclosures this week that the unit tried to pay its operatives almost £1 million in golden handshakes after it was officially disbanded a year ago have increased pressure on General Malan to resign, and implicated Barend du Plessis, the finance minister. A special audit found that he and General Malan had retrospectively approved payments dating back four years for the bureau's operations.

General Malan said yesterday that neither he nor the chief of the defence force could be held responsible for "possible offences" committed by the bureau. "If there are faults, they will not be condemned by me in public,"

Grammy sweep by Quincy Jones

From CHARLES BRENNER IN NEW YORK

QUINCY Jones, the diversely talented composer, arranger and producer, walked away with six Grammy awards at the annual feast of the American recording industry, an event marked this year by a wave of patriotic fervour and salutes to the past.

Jones' main honour was for best album, awarded to *Back On The Block*, an attempt to bring together black musical styles, jazz, soul, funk and rap. The awards were hailed by a relieved music industry as artistically merited, in contrast with many recent choices in an event that has often been dismissed by critics as more of a commercial than artistic extravaganza. The contest, billed as the musical equivalent of the Oscars, was marred last year after it was revealed that the duo, Milli Vanilli, had never sung their own songs.

Phil Collins, the British pop star who led the pack of Grammy contenders with eight nominations, had to wait until the final award on Wednesday night to collect his



For the record: singer Bob Dylan receiving a Grammy achievement award from actor Jack Nicholson in New York.

one honour, record of the year for *Another Day In Paradise*, a despairing song about the homeless. "If I had gone home with eight nominations and no awards, my mother would have killed me," he joked. Fear of terrorism compounded the usual anxiety as

6,000 recording-industry workers submitted to tight security precautions to enter the Radio City Music Hall.

Warlike emotion was credited for the best song award to Bette Midler's weepy five-year-old ballad *From A Distance*, revived for the Gulf.

Julie Gold, the composer, won the song of the year award. The academy spent much of the evening honouring older performers. Bob Dylan, who received no awards while he was a chart-buster, won a lifetime achievement Grammy. While the author of

Mr Tambourine Man was belatedly recognised, the Rolling Stones were once more passed over.

In the classical category, the late Leonard Bernstein, the late Vladimir Horowitz, and Daniel Barenboim also received honours.

Colombo MPs let fists do talking

From VUTHA YAPA IN COLOMBO

A FIST fight broke out between government and opposition members in the Sri Lankan parliament yesterday, at one point involving 30 politicians, MPs said.

Vasudeva Nanayakkara, the far-left leader of the United Socialist Alliance, was injured when government members, including senior ministers, assaulted him during the mêlée, he and his colleagues said. Sirima Bandaranaike, the leader of the opposition, said her side of the House would boycott parliament until the Speaker could ensure safety of members.

The trouble flared when the government began debating a bill to set up farmers' organisations, despite an earlier decision by party leaders to defer discussion until next month, the opposition said.

As the opposition protested, government members approved the bill clause by clause, presided over by Ariyaratne, the deputy chairman of committees. Mr Nanayakkara then left his seat and sat on the vacant Speaker's chair. Several government members, including some senior ministers, pulled him from the chair, hit him and pushed him to the floor, one member said. Some MPs lost shirts and shoes as both sides of the House joined in. Opposition members climbed on to tables to protest.

"About six MPs, including some senior ministers, dealt me blows and pushed me along the floor," Mr Nanayakkara said. He received first aid from colleagues and parliamentary staff for injuries to his face and chest. "I sat on the Speaker's chair as a symbolic form of protest against the action of the deputy chairman of committees who was allowing the bill to be passed amidst the confusion."

Mrs Bandaranaike said Mr Rekawa could have suspended Mr Nanayakkara or removed him without allowing government MPs to assault him.

Ranil Wickremesinghe, the leader of the House and industries minister, said opposition MPs' action was disrespectful of the House and they had brought the violence on themselves. He declared: "It is unfortunate that this type of thing should have happened. I would have preferred a debate on the bill."

Proceedings later resumed without the opposition.

Executive 'worked to death'

From JOANNA PITMAN IN TOKYO

A TOKYO court will shortly have to decide whether System Consultant, a Japanese computer software company, worked Hideki Harada, aged 33, to death. Mr Harada's father yesterday filed a lawsuit against the company claiming 80 million yen (£311,976) in damages for his son's *karoshi* (death from overwork).

Mr Harada, who was developing a computer software system for banks, died of a cerebral haemorrhage last May. He had been working more than 100 hours of overtime a month, frequently working 16 hours a day.

Japanese labour law is against Mr Harada's death. Despite 1,277 requests in 1989 and 1990 alone, compensation has never been paid in such a case. The labour ministry claims that overwork can be considered the cause of death only when the victim worked for "24 hours continuously preceding death".

NEW YORK NOTEBOOK by Charles Brenner

Redgrave's case for the defence

If you cannot prove you are misquoted, you can always claim your remarks were taken out of context. The ploy was adopted this month by Vanessa Redgrave after reports that she had sided with President Saddam Hussein. She took half a page in *The New York Times* to explain that although she had called on peace lovers to "unconditionally defend Iraq" against "imperialist" forces, she had made clear that she opposed the invasion of Kuwait. She then compounded the offence by repeating her "unqualified opposition to war in the Middle East".

This week the Broadway world buzzed with reports that she had been dropped from an American tour of *Leviathan* and *Louise*. It was also, apparently, the final straw for her sister Lynn, who was quoted as saying she was so eager to distance herself that she was thinking of changing her name.

American writers have generally held the legal profession in about the same regard as Jonathan Swift did when he cast lawyers into the category of cut-throats and thieves, but they can rarely have furnished such a healthy income for attorneys and judges as they are doing now.

The Supreme Court has been dragged in to adjudicate on two affairs concerning the rights of authors and journalists. This week the justices agreed to tackle the matter of whether a felon may profit from recounting his or her exploits in books or films.

Simon and Schuster, the publisher, is asking the court to reverse a New York rule which requires the state to confiscate royalties paid to

crooks and hand them over to victims of the crime. A state court ordered the company to hand over about \$100,000 (£51,000) it had already paid to Henry Hill, whose account of life in the Mafia was the basis of *Wiseguy*, a best-selling book, and *GoodFellas*, the film by Martin Scorsese. The firm was told to pay a penalty of the same amount.

The publisher's lawyers claimed the New York law, passed in 1977 to prevent David Berkowitz, a serial murderer, from profiting from his memoirs, amounts to suppression of free speech and an obstacle to creativity. The justices will not rule before Carolyn Warmus, the "Fatal Attraction" school teacher, learns her fate at the hands of the jury. Film companies and writers are fighting for the rights to her version of the affair in which she is accused of murdering her lover's wife.

The justices have also to decide on the matter of whether a quotation must contain the words used by the person quoted. Jeffrey Masson, a psychoanalyst, has sued Janet Malcolm, a New York journalist-author, for quoting him as describing himself as an "intellectual gigolo" who intended to turn Freud's house in London into a "place of sex, women, fun".

A lower court found that even if Dr Masson never used those words, Ms Malcolm was entitled to put them into his mouth if she felt they contained the sense of what he told her. Fellow writers have mixed feelings, recalling a pronunciation she made a couple of years ago to the effect that "every journalist who is not too stupid or too full of himself to notice what is going on knows that what he does is morally indefensible".

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Hurd flatters and cajoles EC in new twin-track strategy

FROM GEORGE BROCK, EUROPEAN EDITOR, IN BRUSSELS

DOUGLAS Hurd, freed from the steady restraints of Margaret Thatcher's hostility to Brussels, has adopted a new twin-track strategy inside the European Community. It is working like a dream.

Both his new faces were on display when the community's foreign ministers met this week. Mr Hurd is simultaneously helpful, constructive and polite about his colleagues' strange ideas, while retaining an obdurate resistance to practical changes against Britain's interests. His Treasury colleagues might have softened on a future single currency in Europe, but the Foreign Office is sticking to a Gaullist *Europe des Patries* on integration towards a single political entity.

Mr Hurd, in a speech on the night of the ministers' meeting, spoke of Europe as the "willing co-operation of sovereign states". At the meeting, he and his French counterpart told their colleagues they could not discuss the Soviet proposal to Iraq: Moscow had asked for discretion. The German and Italian foreign ministers made sure that everyone knew that they, too, had been let in on the secret, but did not reveal it.

This did not prevent the

council's chairman, Jacques Poos of Luxembourg, claiming the community had that day passed a "test of credibility" and shown its "ability to act and to influence events". Earlier Mr Poos had claimed, equally implausibly, that EC pressure had helped loosen the Soviet hold on the Baltics. Mr Hurd does not imitate this self-delusion, but habitually refers to foreign ministers' meetings as "useful".

Three foreign ministers reported on their trip to Moscow the previous weekend to talk about aid to the Soviet Union. After the meeting, Mr Hurd joined the chorus of ministers making kinder comments about President Gorbachev, whose troops have stopped killing Lithuanians, sparing the West the dilemma of what to do about diplomatic and financial aid to Moscow.

Inside the meeting, Mr Hurd, backed by Denmark and The Netherlands, stopped the majority immediately reinstating the EC's partially-frozen Soviet aid programme. The European ministers, it emerged, had been repudiated by President Gorbachev, who accused them of being ill-informed foreigners blundering into Soviet internal affairs. The dissenting British, Dutch and Danish trio is the closest the community's fluid alliances become a conservative caucus in the foreign ministers' council.

Before the Gulf confrontation, powerful voices were urging the community to take foreign policy decisions by majority vote and so avoid the squabbles of the past few weeks. In his speech, Mr Hurd set out the British position on "common foreign and security policy", flatly rejecting any majority voting, while affirming Britain's wholehearted European commitment.

The lengths to which Mr

Hurd will go to flatter and cajole his colleagues are best illustrated by the fashionable idea of the Mediterranean CSCE. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe began in 1975 as a human rights bargaining forum with the Soviet Union, and was celebrated with a grand summit in Paris last November. Gianni De Michelis, the Italian foreign minister, now wants to extend the idea to the Middle East and Mediterranean, but has not explained how this might work, or whether any government there will approve of it. Although he is privately opposed, Mr Hurd was sweetly non-committal when leaving Rome. Mrs Thatcher could not have resisted deriding another example of "Euro-nonsense".

In one important respect, Mr Hurd's policy has genuinely shifted towards Europe — but for old-fashioned reasons. Almost unnoticed amid the din of the Gulf war, he has agreed to turn the neglected Western European Union (WEU) into a link between Nato and the community, which will allow the EC to set "guidelines" for the WEU inside Nato. These can only be decided by unanimous agreement, and Mr Hurd is emphatic that defence matters will be restricted to Nato.

Other governments, however, sniff the kind of military acquisition which goes with dreams of creating a European superpower. Britain is ready to agree to submitting the WEU to the community on vague terms because it may help pull together European defence efforts inside the Atlantic alliance. But there is always a risk that a European caucus could part company from the United States. Mr Hurd has quietly taken a big gamble.



Falling idol: the towering statue of Enva Hoxha, Albania's former dictator, being pulled down by demonstrators in Tirana. Thousands took to the streets on Wednesday to demand social reforms and removal of Hoxha's name from the university. Leading article, page 15; report, page 22

Georgia braced to meet Kremlin intervention

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Gamsakhurdia of Georgia accused Soviet security forces yesterday of collaborating cynically with underground guerrilla bands as the republic braced itself for a draconian Kremlin intervention in its already bitter internal disputes.

The parliament in Tbilisi, which has followed the Baltic republics in declaring formal independence, refused even to discuss Moscow's threat to impose a state of emergency, on the grounds that it had not been notified formally of the Kremlin move. "How can we discuss it when we have not received any official document?" said a spokeswoman for the Georgian legislature, referring to the Soviet parliament's warning on Wednesday that the republican authorities must restore order in three days or face a crackdown.

Moscow wants the dismantling of illegal private armies, an end to illegal arms-making and the lifting of the siege by Georgian forces of Tskhinvali, capital of the South Ossetia region, where local leaders want to remain part of the Soviet Union. Mr Gamsakhurdia acknowledged in an interview published yesterday that "absolutely no one" exercised state authority in South Ossetia.

"Armed men, bandits wander the streets and terrorise the population," he told *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, the radical youth daily, adding that "a significant part of the blame for this lies with the Soviet army". He said Soviet army officers had taken part, in disguise, in a guerrilla raid on Georgian police, while Ossetian nationalist leaders regularly took refuge in a Soviet paratrooper base.

While the Moscow parliament wants a state of emergency in the whole of South Ossetia, and the Georgian parliament has already imposed that status on some parts of the region, the two legislatures seem to mean diametrically opposing things. The Tbilisi government wants its own forces to control the whole area, while the Ossetians are hoping that Soviet interior ministry troops, already patrolling besieged Tskhinvali, will extend their patrol to the whole

region. Any broad Kremlin clampdown would presumably be aimed at both the conflicts in the republic, where at least 30 people have been killed in political violence in recent months. One pits forces loyal to the Gamsakhurdia administration against a rival nationalist militia known as the Mkhedroni (horsemen), which has been the object of simultaneous, but ostensibly separate moves this week by the Georgian interior ministry and Soviet troops.

Latest reports on the Georgian ministry's drive said 50 fighters had been arrested, along with Mkhedroni leader, Djaba Iosseliani, while confiscated material included submachine-guns, pistols, about 100 stolen vehicles, radio transmitters, signal rockets and explosives.

The other dispute centres

Waigel signals tax rise in Germany

FROM IAN MURRAY IN BONN

WITH thousands joining protest marches and sit-ins for the right to work in eastern Germany, Theo Waigel, the finance minister, admitted to the Bundestag for the first time yesterday that he would have to raise taxes.

Herr Waigel was giving members a first chance to study his draft 1991 budget, totalling DM399.7 billion (£138.78). It is already clear that extra money is needed by May to pay the country's agreed contributions to British and American Gulf War costs, and aid for the Soviet Union.

The government is due to decide by March 8 what tax increases will be needed, and Herr Waigel warned the public that the new levels would take effect from July. The inexorable deepening of eastern Germany's difficulties is, however, making it increasingly difficult to predict how much will be necessary while

restructuring takes place. The Metal Workers Union claimed on Wednesday that 35,000 workers marched through Rostock to protest at threats of mass redundancy in the town's shipyards.

Thousands joined similar marches in other towns in the region, the poorest state in the united country, in the first big demonstrations in east Germany since unification.

Cancellation of 103 Soviet orders has made restructuring essential and it is expected that at least half of the 45,000 jobs in the Mecklenburg-West Pomerania yards will be lost. The Neptune yard, where Germany's first iron-clad ship was built in 1851, is threatened with closure. Alfred Gomolka, the Christian Democrat state prime minister, told the population to be ready to help each other "through the bitter valley of tears" that lay ahead.

Croatia follows Slovene route

FROM DESSA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE

FOLLOWING the example of Slovenia, the Croatian parliament has hastily adopted legislation decreeing that the Yugoslav legal system no longer takes precedence over Croatia's own laws.

The legislation means that federal authorities cannot without approval from the Croatian government proclaim a state of emergency or use armed forces in peacetime. Dr Frango Tudjman, the Croat president, says Croatia will break from Yugoslavia if Slovenia secedes.

Fault shuts down nuclear reactor

Tokyo — A faulty generator triggered the automatic shutdown of a nuclear reactor in Japan yesterday (Joanna Pitman writes). Less than two weeks ago an accident caused a radiation leak at another Japanese plant. The Kashiwazaki nuclear power plant, northwest of here, is only five months old. The government said the incident was minor.

Airport demand

Peking — China said it wants more information about a new airport and port project in Hong Kong, as a fresh round of talks on the issue with Britain began here. Peking has criticised the £8.4 billion project, saying it would drain the reserves of the British colony before it returns to China in 1997. (Reuters)

Mafia chief free

Palermo — Michele "The Pope" Greco, jailed for life as Mafia "boss of bosses" in 1987, was ordered released by an Italian court because of a legal bungle. Judicial officials said the Palermo appeals court ruled that the elderly Greco could leave jail but imposed conditions concerning his residence. (AP)

Ministers go

Delhi — President Venkataraman of India has accepted the resignations of Vidyut Charan Shukla, the foreign minister, and four other ministers. Chandra Shekar, the prime minister, reluctantly agreed to get rid of the five, disqualified from parliament for violating a law on switching party allegiance. (Reuters)

Reform attacked

Harare — Michel Camdessus, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, has made clear his disapproval of recent land reform legislation weakening Zimbabwe's Bill of Rights.

Beef over buffalo

Delhi — An extremist Hindu group, angered by the sale of "beef" in a five-star hotel, called off its protest after it was told only buffalo meat was being served at a British food festival advertising beef and Yorkshire pudding. (AP)

Czechs return confiscated land

FROM REUTER IN PRAGUE

CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S parliament approved a sweeping restitution bill yesterday, becoming the first former communist country to return property illegally seized by the old regime.

Vaclav Klaus, the finance minister, said the bill would help create a middle entrepreneurial class to spearhead the move towards a market economy. The bill affects about 10 per cent of property in Czechoslovakia, valued at about 300 billion crowns (£5.15 billion). Property will be returned to original owners or direct heirs.

The bill entered the statute books after two days of heated debate, during which nearly 100 amendments were put

forward, but not approved. The House of the People ratified the bill early yesterday, but failed at first to get a necessary majority from the Slovak part of the House of Nations, which later voted its approval.

The new law includes property belonging to people who fled the country, but excludes property legally nationalised before and after 1948, when the communists took over. This will be subject to another law. Church land will also be settled at a later date.

Property will be returned as real estate or in the form of bonds. The law only applies to Czechoslovak citizens resident in the country.

MADRID: The Council of Europe yesterday welcomed Czechoslovakia as its 25th member and set the groundwork for the future admission of other East European countries. It also agreed to promote cultural relations with Moscow, seen by European leaders as a significant step for improving relations. Alexander Bessmertnykh, the Soviet foreign minister, signed the European Cultural Convention saying Moscow sought to "expand the area of co-operation".

Poland's admission is expected to be announced after parliamentary elections there next month and there are plans to include Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.



Bessmertnykh: Moscow looking for closer ties

Affluence raises cancer risk

FROM ROBERT COCKBURN IN SYDNEY

WOMEN living in the wealthiest suburbs of Sydney, New South Wales, are more likely to die of breast cancer, according to a survey that holds serious implications for women in affluent societies.

This unlikely and unwanted status symbol has been attributed to the richer, fatty diet of women in higher socio-economic classes. The tendency to wait longer before starting a family, or not having children at all, is also seen as a key factor in the survey by Professor Peter Curson of Macquarie university in Sydney.

The exclusive Sydney suburb of Hunters Hill has the highest death rate from breast cancer in New South Wales. There, women suf-

fer a mortality rate which is 240 per cent above the state's average of 27 deaths per 100,000.

Professor Curson, an expert in human geography, told the *Sydney Morning Herald*: "Nowhere else in the state is there such a continuous belt where there are so many high-risk areas for breast cancer."

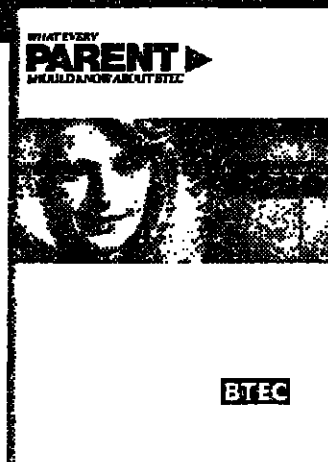
His research was carried out between 1981 and 1988. The incidence of disease closely reflects levels of affluence in Sydney suburbs. Statistics from the North Shore and Eastern Suburbs areas indicate death rates from breast cancer between 30 per cent and 60 per cent above the state average. The professor notes that both areas have a higher number of older

women who are at greater risk. Mosman and Willoughby on the North Shore were more than 60 per cent above the state average. Fashionable Woollahra was 61 per cent above.

Professor Curson believes that changes in women's lifestyle can be held responsible for the increase. "I think many women in the Eastern Suburbs and the North Shore are at risk because they are opting for a career," he said. "It is the end product of careerism."

Increased stress levels, associated with full-time careers, are believed to increase the chances that the body's immune system will break down — a possible contributory factor in cancer in richer women up to the age of 74.

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BTEC

At last, a luxury car luxury but not s

Settle into the electrically adjustable leather seats of the new Peugeot 605 SVE 24.

Listen to the double-sealed door shut with a deep, soundproofed thud. Run your fingers over the Californian walnut.

You'll feel the cares of the office slip away, and you're not even out of the car park.

Subjective terms like 'luxurious' inevitably spring to mind. However, Autocar and Motor magazine were able to be completely objective. They compared the 605's levels of refinement with those of the Jaguar

maintains your pre-set temperature.

In view of the fact that very few people will be able to resist the 605 SVE 24's sumptuous interior, we've fitted an ultrasonic alarm as standard. (For additional protection there's

Luxury.

a security key pad which you can order as an optional extra. Before the engine can be started, the correct four-digit sequence has to be keyed in.)

More familiar will be the buttons for the electric sunroof, the electrically operated heated door mirrors, and the one touch driver's window.

Naturally, there's cruise control. And the stereo radio control? It's on one of the 4 steering column stalks, of course.

Several switches are duplicated on these stalks for fingertip control, though the 32 main controls have all been designed to fall readily to hand, and "...even with the wheel set fully back and down, the comprehensive and clear instrument panel is fully visible to a six foot-plus driver" Autocar and Motor.

Should you decide to test drive the new 605 SVE (and we sincerely hope you do) we suggest you take it through a variety of road and

driving conditions, because you'll find there's virtually no variation in the 605's ride. Peugeot's engineers have built in an automatic electronic ride control. This keeps your journey smooth

by constantly adjusting the settings of the shock absorbers between hard and soft, based on information received from sensors around the car. Each of the shocks contains a tiny electric motor that carries out these adjustments in just 150th of a second.

And while you're relaxing as you watch the world fly by, it's unlikely you'll hear it fly by. The 700 hours the 605 spent in our wind tunnel has given it the best drag coefficient in its class.

Just for good measure we've added 3 silencers to the exhaust and double sealing for any pipes or wires passing from the engine to the cabin.

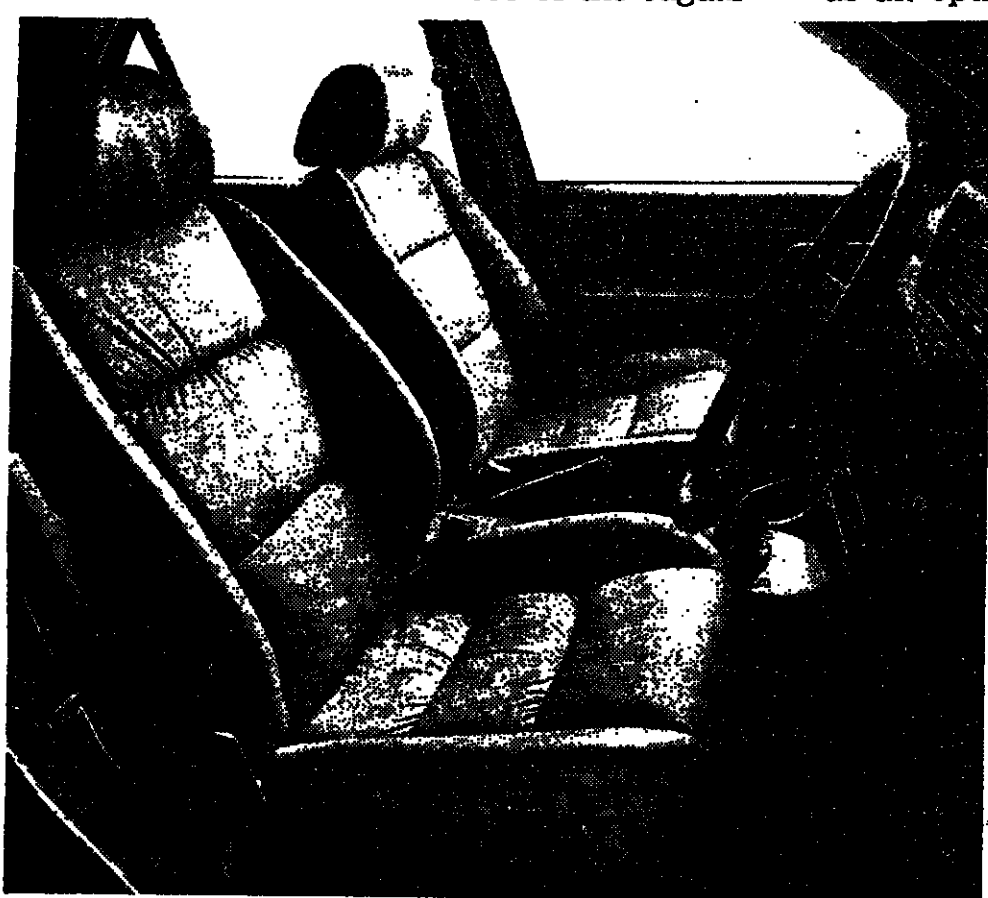
We've even mounted the engine on its own hydraulically dampened suspension system.



All this has created the kind of refined interior environment that until now was only found in the world's most expensive luxury cars.

As far as the exterior environment is concerned, rest assured each 605 petrol model runs on unleaded, and each one, from the £16,660 SLI to the £26,520 SVE 24, is fitted with three-way catalytic converters that exceed forthcoming E.E.C. emission standards.

So everyone can relax as a 605 flies by, whether it be 2 litre, 3 litre, turbo diesel or 24 valve V6.



XJ6, and came to the conclusion that, "...in some respects it (the 605) even exceeds them."

Next, carefully examine the rows of controls. Our designers have made sure you don't have to be a 747 pilot to work out what they do, though one or two may be unfamiliar to you: those that control the heated front seats, for example, and the electronic climate control system which automatically



Peugeot 605 SVE

Year that's long on not short on car

"A real driver's car that rides well, is quiet, roomy and well built is still the exception rather than the rule in this market sector. The 605 has all the credentials it needs," Autocar & Motor.

That was the kind of response we'd hoped for, not just because it shows the 605 in a good light, but because it touched on a truth we'd discovered when talking to drivers of executive cars.

Many of these drivers had found, to their cost, that manufacturers often give their cars a veneer of luxury features so they look terrific in the showroom, but once out on the open road they show all the driving characteristics of a Chesterfield sofa.

At Peugeot we pride ourselves on the performance and handling of all our cars. When we entered the 'hot hatchback' market we revolutionised it with the now legendary 205 GTI. We wouldn't have entered the luxury car market unless we were confident we could do the same.

For sheer power there can be no doubt that the 605 SVE 24 is a wolf in Saville Row clothing. In controlled tests it accelerated comfortably to 145mph, leaving its German cousins, the Audi V8 and the BMW 735i, in its wake.

But power alone is no mark of engineering sophistication. More important is how efficiently a car uses that power.

One of the problems with high performance engines is that with a fixed airflow volume they suffer from relatively poor gas inflow at low revs. In other words,

acceleration in fourth and fifth gears is impaired.

Peugeot's engineers have solved this problem with a variable inlet manifold, so that gas velocity, and consequently torque, is

Car

increased at lower revs. The result is that with a 605 SVE 24 you don't have to change down to accelerate.

An engine's ability to produce power can also be affected by things like air temperature, fuel octane rating and even altitude. (A conventional engine actually performs less well in the Swiss Alps than in the Dutch Lowlands).

To overcome this, Peugeot's engineers have devised an engine management system that automatically takes all these factors into consideration, and chooses the optimum spark timing and fuel injection timings from a choice of 11,664 permutations.

However, as any racing car designer will tell you, for a driver to be in complete control, chassis design is paramount.

Our racing car designers, whose 905 will be racing at Le Mans this year, have been invaluable in helping to engineer the unique 605 ride and handling system.

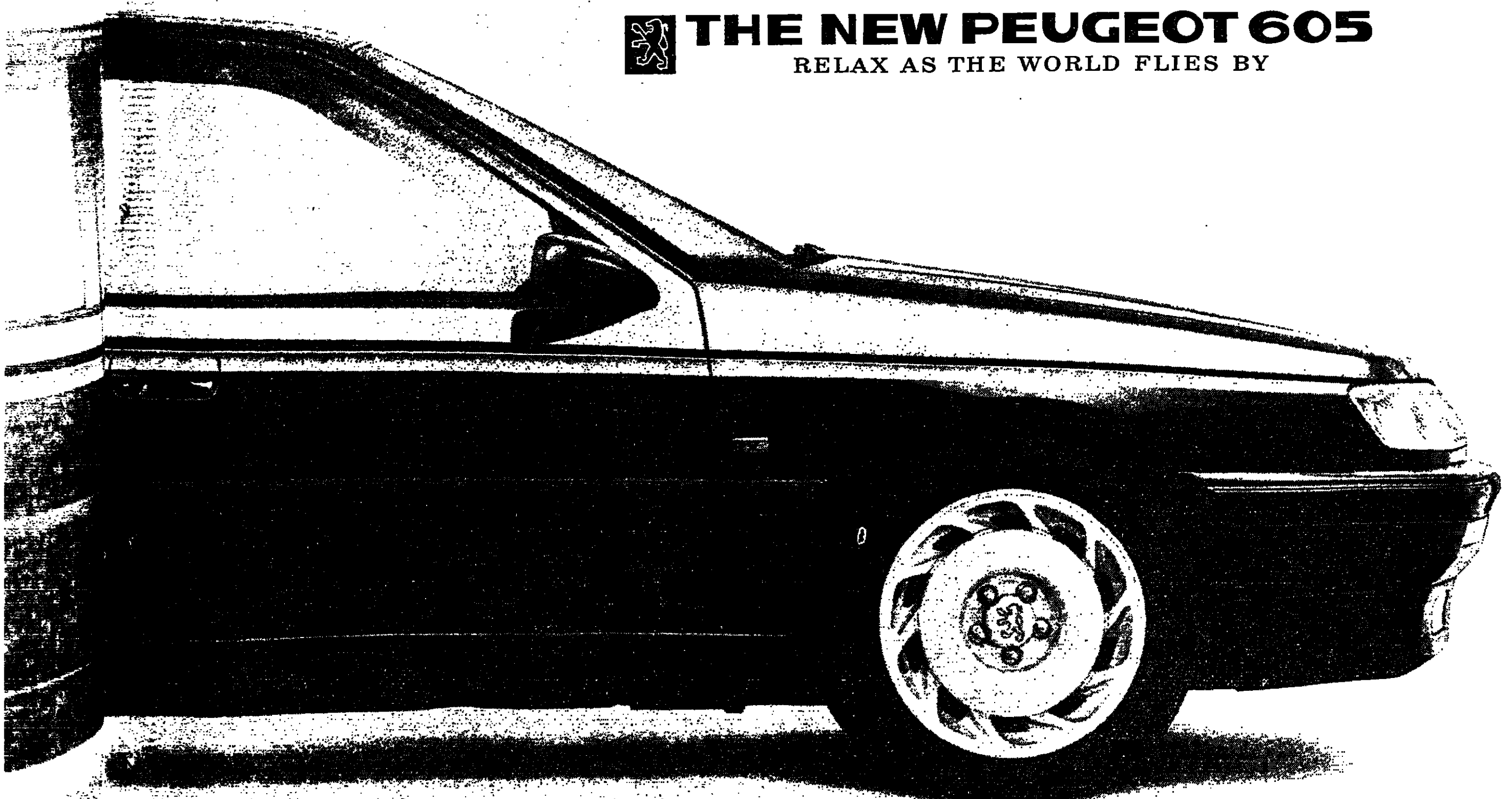
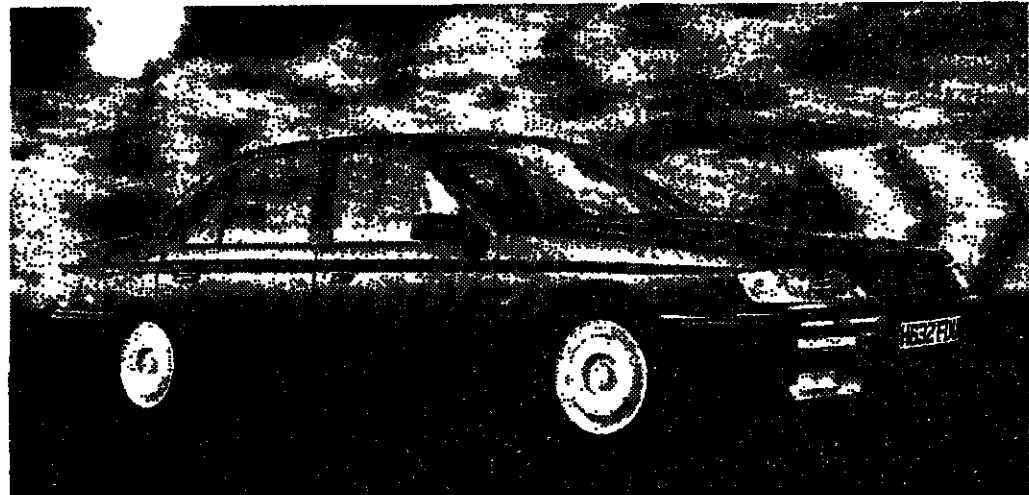
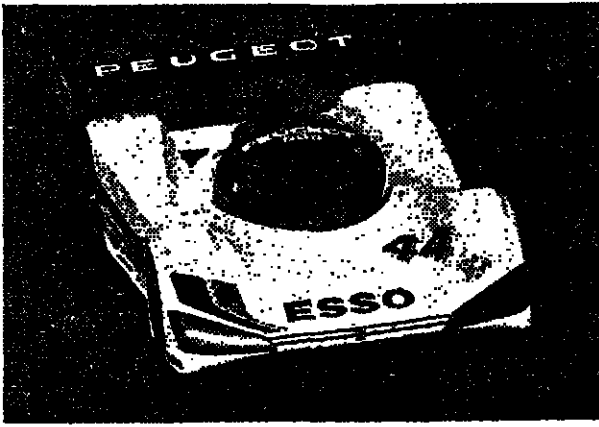
The double wishbone rear suspension is derived from the classic layout of competition

and sports cars, with computers being used to set the ideal geometry for keeping 'rubber on the road'.

A special lateral link has been added to the rear suspension which prevents the front from diving when braking sharply, and the rear from squatting when accelerating. Speed-variable power steering takes the effort out of negotiating the 605's 4.7 metres around the company car park, then gets progressively more taut and responsive as the car's speed increases.

Car & Driver said, "The Peugeot handles superbly, ranking among the very best large front-drive automobiles. Indeed the 605 has such good balance and grip that the uninformed might not be able to decide if the front or rear wheels are doing the driving," and who are we to disagree.

Needless to say, the high performance 605 comes complete with a high performance



THE NEW PEUGEOT 605

RELAX AS THE WORLD FLIES BY

No one watching the press conference given by Janet Corner, widow of the Victoria bombing victim, could have felt less than admiration. As one person who saw it said to me: "She makes you proud to be British."

The fact that she had requested this press gathering as a way of warding off the attentions of the tabloid press gives one rather less cause for national pride. By making herself available for questioning in this way, she was hoping to rid herself of those elements in the press that had been hounding her for prurient details of her life with her late husband.

Most discussion of right-to-privacy legislation has concerned itself with sexual scandal. The pornography of grief seems to provide at least as hard a case for the press to answer. Presumably the feelings of patriotism and resolve in the face of terrorism which Mrs Corner inspired in my friend would be offered as justification by the more stridently patriotic tabloids.

There is an argument which goes something like this: reported

Janet Daley argues that sentimental, quasi-fictional reporting of tragedy has gone too far

Grist to the pornographers of grief

bombing outrages have little significance for most people. Death and injury statistics never bring home the human truth of tragedy. It is only the personalisation of these events, the actuality of real women widowed and children orphaned, that makes people feel the force of events.

Human interest stories have a long and reputable tradition in journalism, as do luridly detailed "disaster" accounts. The junior reporter who chases fire engines and makes his reputation by being the first to talk to victims is part of professional folklore. The question is whether the exploitation of bereavement is part of this tradition. At what point does the legitimate seeking after particular, personal illustrations, in order to

create a human dimension, become cynical voyeurism?

Because of the peculiar folk culture of the British tabloid press, there is a twist to their human-interest coverage which goes beyond the simple issue of sensationalism. In recent years, a bizarre cult has evolved in which there is scarcely any conception of news coverage. Stories about soap opera characters (as opposed to the actors who portray them) have now become the stuff of features pages. A hybrid form of fiction-feature story, in which the bounds of reality and the function of entertainment are confounded, has become an accepted genre.

The consequences of this for the treatment of real stories which hinge on emotional content can be seen in the coverage of Mrs



Corner: twice a victim

Corner's bereavement. Today, for example, opened its account with a quasi-fictional narrative. Under the heading, "He forgives them, but IRA robbed me of a kiss", came the text:

"She didn't even have the chance to say goodbye. Janet

Corner was still sound asleep when her husband David slipped out of the house at 6.30am. There was no need for him to disturb her with a farewell kiss. He knew he would be home that evening. He always was. He looked in on their baby son, Adam, but left him to sleep too."

How could anyone, least of all the Today reporter, know what David Corner did in the last moments before he left the house, given that Mrs Corner and baby son were both sound asleep? Cheapening an actual personal tragedy with this kind of dramatisation is more than tasteless. It reflects a serious confusion about the status of reality. Editors fighting for their right to untrammelled pursuit of information undermine their own

credibility when they print pulp fiction which is only loosely based on real events. The nightmare of public exposure in the press now consists not only in the revelation of one's private life but in being turned into a member of the *dramatis personae* of tabloid genre fiction.

Excoriating the state of tabloid journalism used to be a foreigner's gambit. Visiting Americans, shocked by their triviality, were assured that the tabloids existed to serve a market. Even though unease is now widespread even among the indigenous population, the complacent providers of working-class media still chant the old refrain: "This is what people buy. We cannot be blamed for giving them what they want."

to silence criticism, although it rarely occurs to anyone to make out this sort of case for dealers in heroin.

Legislation on these matters is not easy in a free society. At precisely what point does investigative reporting become unforgivable intrusion? When Captain Kevin Hunt, pilot of the plane that crashed on the M1, was lying in intensive care, his wife was hounded by press demanding to know if he had uttered any words about the crash. Does public interest automatically mean that something falls within the legitimate scope of news coverage?

Does a public craving for sentimental fantasy justify the fictionalising of journalism? Must the present state of newspaper readers' taste always be taken at face value? (Is it, in other words, possible for public standards to be lowered by the media?) It cannot always be journalistic appropriateness which is the measure, but the wider issue of how people treat one another. Journalists are not outside the reach of ordinary personal morality.

Philip Howard

Vowel as in vole

General Colin Powell is a stalwart and formidable figure, whom I would much rather have on our side than the other. The only worry I have about him is his first name. We speak the same language as the Americans, divided by pronunciation, idiom and Christian names. Nothing wrong with Colin, you understand. There have been some notable ones, from Spenser's Colin Clout to Colin of Clonfert in *Kidnapped*, and from the hero of Thomas Tickle's sentimental ballad *Colin and Lucy* to the old English nickname for a Swiss, which was Colin Tampon, as John Bull is for an Englishman. It is just the way that he pronounces it, with a long o, so as to rhyme with bowling. What can it mean?

Two things are going on here, I think. One is the American wish not to put up with stilted British pronunciations, but to say words as they are spelled. To pronounce Colin the way we do, with a short o, we should logically spell it with a double l, as in a collie dog, a Tom Collins, or a dolly, or folly, holly, jolly. Logic has little to do with English spelling. That is what Americans complain about.

The other factor is American individuality and wish to be different in names. Roman Catholic and Orthodox countries impose quite a limited range of saints' names on their children. England is more liberal, and you can trace generations by their preference for celebrity names such as Gary, Wayne and Tracy.

In America, the home of the free, there is a wish that a child should have a unique name. As Sam Goldwyn is alleged to have said: "Now why did you name your baby John? Every Tom, Dick and Harry is named John." I know an American pilot named Lear, who intended to christen his son John also, "because I've always wanted a house with two Johns in it". When that was vetoed, he christened his wretched son Gondo, and then, getting into the swing of onomastic puns, his daughters Shenda and Sheva. British children would curl up at the edges with embarrassment for having such funny names. In America, an unusual name is a matter of pride.

The name Colin comes from two possible roots, as recounted

by our Colin Dunne in *The Times* on Monday. The first is the pet medieval diminutive Col(ie) for Nicholas. This has now become enduringly popular, and is treated as a separate name from its longer version. The other is an Anglicised form of the Gaelic name Caillean, which is particularly favoured among the bloody Campbells and the Mackenzies. The Black Watch has always had at least one Colin Campbell in its ranks, some of them very famous soldiers. This Gaelic Colin relates to St Columba as *Crisdean* does to Christ and *Moirean* to Mary. General Colin Powell's pronunciation may have been influenced by the popularity of Colleen as a girl's name in the States. In Anglo-Irish colleen (Gaelic *callín*) means a wench, and it is not used as a given name.

You then see this American refusal to be bound by old-world traditions and pronunciations in other Christian names: for example, the American habit of pronouncing the th in Anthony. Anthony has had quite a curious journey into our nomenclature as Colin. It started life as the old Roman family name of a gens, Antonius, with no h in it. Antonius is of uncertain origin, but probably Etruscan. The most famous member of the family was Marcus Antonius, the triumvir, known to us as Mark Antony from *Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears*. At some stage before Thomas Fuller published his *History of the Worthies of England* in 1622, we had started inserting the h into Anthony. This was inspired by a learned but erroneous folk etymology connection of the name with the Greek *anthos*, a flower. The English put the t into Anthony to show that they knew their Greek, but they never pronounced it, in the same way that we pronounce Featherstonehaugh Fanshawe, and Cholmondeley to rhyme with Bumley. It is a quaint old form of English onomastic snobbery. The Americans are not so keen on snobbery as we are. If they choose to pronounce their names as their spelling looks, good for them.

"Yossarian? Is that his name?" Yossarian? What the hell kind of name is Yossarian? Lieutenant Scheisskopf had the facts at his fingertips. "It's Yossarian's name, sir," he explained.

Saddam's infamous five move into the direct line of fire

Amir Taheri on the group of Iraqis who could decide the fate of the giant fighting machine they created

Tes-house gossip in Baghdad calls them the evil five (*al-khamat al-khabihah*). In official propaganda, however, they are presented as companions of the chief (*al-Ansar ar-Ra'is*). The five are President Saddam Hussein's closest aides, men who have survived more than two decades of bitter power struggle and bloody purges. None has served in the army but all wear military uniform and between them they have created the biggest army in the Middle East. Discussion now reported in their ranks may be the best indicator yet of the true readiness of their army to resist allied assault — and of the chance of an internal coup that would bring peace.

The five men shared Saddam's dream of reviving the glories of ancient Babylon by making Baghdad the capital of an empire stretching from the Gulf to the Mediterranean. They were at his side on Wednesday when the reply to Moscow's peace plan was prepared, and again yesterday when the president addressed the nation. Yet the apparent unity around their leader conceals a growing disagreement. There are signs that the five have been quarrelling among themselves about the response to Mikhail Gorbachev's invitation.

More than a month of intensive bombing by the allies has shaken the myth of Saddam's invulnerability. The response to Gorbachev's appeal was worked out at an expanded session of the Revolutionary Command Council, the highest organ of the state and the Baath party. Top generals and four powerful provincial governors were also present, the idea being to implicate all key people in the decisions.

Of the five men closest to him, the most influential is Izzat Ibrahim al-Durri, a 60-year-old former schoolteacher and a possible successor to Saddam. Durri, however, suffers from ill health

and lacks the charisma necessary to hold the Baathist regime together. Next in line is Taha Yassin al-Jizawi, who commands the 500,000 Popular Army, the party's militia. A former taxi driver, al-Jizawi is known, even in Iraq, for his brutality. There is evidence that he personally murdered some of Saddam's opponents.

The third companion is Ali Hassan al-Majid, Saddam's son-in-law. A can-do whizz-kid, he heads the president's personal security services. Two big-name diplomats, Tariq Aziz, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Sadoun Hammadi, complete the list. Aziz, a practising Catholic who nevertheless has called for an Islamic *jihād*, is the regime's theoretician. Under his real name, Mikhail Yuhanna, he worked for years as clerk to a Jewish merchant in Baghdad before joining the underground Baath in the 1960s. Many of his relatives serve in Saddam's personal bodyguard. Hammadi, an American-trained former scientist, was a Baath militant even before Saddam himself.

The foundations of the huge fighting force they have created have long been in place. Iraq, put on the map as a distinct entity by the British in 1921, was a state created around an army. British colonial officers tried to flatter their local clients by referring to Iraq as "the Arab Prussia". The profession of arms was elevated into the most prestigious field of endeavour and the shortest route to upward social mobility. Under Saddam the whole country, with a population of more than 15 million, has been turned into a support structure for his war machine. If the ground fighting ends quickly, Saddam would escape with the main part of his military largely intact. Peace now, even if Kuwait is abandoned, would enable Saddam to stifle all opposition and remobilise his forces.

The army, navy and air force in



Obedient orders: an Iraqi soldier will only be as good as his leaders

fact represent only part of the overall military structure of the Iraqi state. The militarisation of society begins at primary schools, where all children aged between six and 15 are organised in the Vanguard Movement, based on models in North Korea and Cuba. At 15, they are "invited" to join the Youth Brigades. Those aged 18 or more can apply to join the Popular Army, which recruits even retired people.

Since 1968, a number of other paramilitary forces have been formed. The Frontier Force consists of some 100,000 professional, mostly Kurdish, soldiers. The

Special Force, partly trained by East German and North Korean experts in the 1980s, is an anti-guerrilla force of some 25,000 men. The Department of General Intelligence (DGI) also has its own armed units — probably 12,000 men of its own.

The cream of the Iraqi military, the Republican Guard, is recruited from among the best members of all these forces. It has 120,000 professional fighters who are supposed to be devoted to the person of Saddam Hussein. This is why Saddam is anxious to save them from total destruction by the allies. In 1988 only one in 75

candidates wishing to join the Republican Guard was successful. The minimum height of a guardsman is 5ft 8in. Religious and ethnic background is also important. Sunni Muslims and Christians are favoured over Shi'ite Muslims and Kurds.

Saddam Hussein has never been sure of the loyalty of his regular armed forces. The officer corps in particular consists largely of Sunni Muslims who have never accepted the Baath party's domination of the military.

Nevertheless, despite the heavy odds against them, the average Iraqi soldiers are likely to fight well and courageously in defence of their own territory. The fact that they defected to Iran in droves during the Iran-Iraq war does not mean that many will do so in the face of American or British troops. Surrendering to a Muslim nation implied no humiliation.

The disaster that is likely to befall Iraq is of course not a result of lack of courage or weapons. Saddam and the "evil five" led the Iraqi army to defeat in a war against Iran in 1975 and to near-disaster in the war against the same nation in the 1980s. They now seem headed for an even greater catastrophe.

If the allied ground campaign against Iraq is over quickly, the climate of fear created by Saddam and his aides would be difficult to sustain. The stage could be set for a coup, the normal method of changing governments in Iraq for more than half a century. Saddam has tried to minimise the chances of a coup by arranging family links among almost all his senior officers and his own clique. The regime's dignitaries have also been encouraged to spy against one another. Every one of them, according to Baghdad gossip, has signed an oath of allegiance to Saddam in his own blood. They refer to Saddam as *abawi* (my father).

But Iraq's political traditions show that in the end those who stand closest to the chief are the first to stab him in the back.

Amir Taheri is the author of *Caudron: The Middle East Behind the Headlines* (Hutchinson).

...and moreover

ALAN COREN

I was in Leeds on Tuesday, handing a chicken leg to a grizzled barman when a thought struck me. It was not unconnected with the fact that, somewhere above my head, Yorkshire Television Holdings had just coughed up £5.1 million for a 19.07 per cent stake in Tyne Tees Television; for market analysts had come to the conclusion from this far-fetched that YTV might some day take over TTV in the hope of controlling the fuseside entertainment of the entire North East, and should that happen, it would have a direct bearing on the careers of both me and the bear.

The bear and I had convened for the purpose of recording a further shimmering half hour of YTV's *Through the Keyhole*, that splendid diversissement which not only launched the unique vowels of Mr Loyd Grossman upon a baffled world, but also — as if this were not enough — granted the rich and famous the opportunity of inviting ten million weekly snoots onto their premises to see what they have in the fridge. Best of all, though, it provides work for moonlighting hacks who might otherwise have nothing to do after moonrise, since the show requires more than just Mr Grossman, more even than Mr David Frost, flower of quiz-hosts, and more yet than an unending gallimaufry of incautious celebrities eager to expose their boudoirs to ridicule. It also requires a three-man panel whose job it is to stare at a clip of film and attempt to guess whose keyhole the camera has gone

through. The homeowner is then fanfared in as a guest — or, more typically, unguessed — to be presented by David with a priceless goldtite key.

I have been a member of that panel for five proud years, and it was therefore more than my usual trepidation which convulsed me when I found, on Tuesday, the studios shrill with such rumours as mergers always generate, for the one thing worse than stage-fright is non-stage-fright, ie, the terror that someone is going to take your stage away. If YTV and TTV welded themselves into YTTTV, would *Through the Keyhole* survive? You dared not ask. You merely strode manfully into make-up to let someone put a brave face on you, and you went out there to do your thing.

The recording began as unobtrusively as ever, the host bawled on, the audience cheered, the lights went down, and upon the giant studio monitor the mystery house materialised, with the irrepressible Loyd shimmering through it, dropping such clues as his mangling glottis permitted us to decode. They were not enough: we hummed, we hawed, but we chuckled in, finally, the sponge. At this, more than his customary glee suffused old Frosty's face: he pivoted towards the audience and asked them if they would welcome, please — Hercules the Bear!

Hercules came on. Hercules filled the set. Hercules was a ginger moustache. He had with him a trainer, but when you saw the two of them together, the

word seemed nominal. If the caprice took Hercules, you felt, the trainer might be called lunch. Indeed, Hercules was hungry: the trainer kept giving him chicken legs. Hercules ate them while he looked at you. Little could be more unsettling: you felt that all that stood between you and Hercules was *hors-d'oeuvres*. Then Hercules put his head on my desk. He has the world's biggest head. The desk sagged. The trainer handed me a chicken leg. Hercules looked at it.

This was when the thought struck me. I know what is happening, I thought. A decision has indeed been taken upstairs. But they are not going to take *Through the Keyhole* off, they are going to have it eaten. It is cheaper than writing contracted people out of the series: it invites far less tabloid hassle about changing corporate policies, it requires no fraught explanations to the ITC, it is environment-friendly, ideologically sound on animal rights, and will bring only sympathetic publicity to YTV — *Entire Cast of Popular Game Show Eaten by Bear: A Nation Mourns*. I held out the leg and waited for Hercules to carry on up the arm. I am an old trouper. It was the way he would have wanted to go, weeps widow.

But Hercules turned away. He looked at his trainer. His trainer looked at me. A long hush fell. You could feel *Through the Keyhole* hanging in the balance. "It's your cufflinks," said the trainer, finally. "They've put him off." I have saved the show. Thank you, shirt. Thank me, world.

Last wag at Westminster

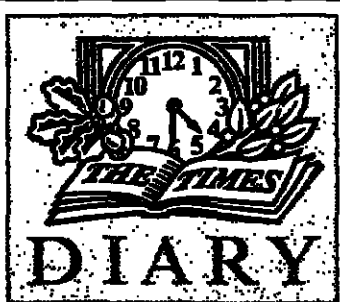
After centuries of freedom to roam the corridors of the House of Commons wagging their tails beside their masters, dogs are about to be banished from the Palace of Westminster. When the long-awaited Bridge Street extension opens in October, man's best friend, no matter how cherished or well connected, will be banned. Only guide and security dogs will be exempt.

The change of policy has been approved by the Commons services committee, chaired by John MacGregor, leader of the House and proud owner of Timmy, a dachshund. The proposal originated with the Commons accommodation sub-committee, whose chairman Stan Orme is adamant. "We should have a very firm rule prohibiting dogs from anywhere



within the precincts of the building. It is extraordinary how many dogs come in and out. It is, after all, a palace."

Up to 18 dogs of all shapes and sizes are brought into the Commons by politicians or staff each day and are a familiar sight on the Palace lawn. Of the party leaders, only Paddy Ashdown owns one, a mongrel called Traddles, but "he never brings him to the House", says a Lib-Dem spokesman. The ruling has, however, much upset



Bryan Gould, the shadow environment secretary, who daily brings in his Scottie, Angus. Gould's wife Gillian, who is also his Commons secretary, is equally annoyed. "Angus is no problem. He just sits quietly under the desk all day and goes home when we go home. He likes the company, he likes being with us. He does not want to be left on his own at home." Labour MP Austin Mitchell, who sometimes brings his terrier, Foggi into the House, is more philosophical. "Dogs leave their distinctive mark all over the place," he says. "They are a bloody nuisance. I will just have to make alternative arrangements."

The best-known dog in the Commons, Offa, guide dog to Labour MP David Blunkett, will of course continue to enjoy unrestricted access to the Commons chamber and other areas. But come the autumn will she miss the company of her friends?

● The Rev Ian Paisley, no slouch when it comes to railing against decadence, has a flagrant example of it on his heavily guarded doorstep. In a house located within a bellow of his home in the fashionable quarter of east Belfast, a group of women has opened a branch of the world's oldest profession. Paisley, though driven past the house of ill repute daily in an armoured saloon car, has so far resisted any temptation to call and deliver one of his famed hellfire-and-brimstone denunciations.

In Ashton's steps

Fifteen months after a serious foot injury suspended her career, ballerina Genesis Rosato is about to return in triumph to the Covent Garden stage. She will play the leading role of Natalia in *A Month in the Country*. Her return has an added element of poignancy: it was the late Sir Frederick Ashton, founder of the Royal Ballet, who originally coached her in the part.

"I was the last person to be chosen by Sir Frederick, who choreographed the ballet," she says between rehearsals. "Unfortunately, I was injured before I ever had a chance to perform it." The 33-year-old dancer will make her debut in the part at Covent Garden at a gala performance on April 10, undoubtedly retaining something of the spirit inspired by Sir Frederick, who died in 1988.

Et tu, Maggie?

Robert Key must be one of the more anxious junior ministers at Westminster. While his superior at the Department of the Environment, Michael Heseltine, broods on the final shape of a poll-tax replacement, Key has had the task of fielding calls from Tory MPs protesting at the proposed levels of this year's community charge in their constituencies. One caller at least must have had his undivided attention: Margaret Thatcher.

The former prime minister once described the poll tax as the flagship policy of her third term, but that has not reconciled her to the levels being set by Barnet council in her Finchley constituency. Key has had more than one call from Mrs Thatcher protesting that the central revenue-support grant to the council is too low. "She is very unhappy that the poll tax is expected to rise from £338 by about £60 in April," says one source.

● Was Lord Young being too modest when he boasted that the £150 million sale of Rover to British Aerospace was the deal of the decade? Kenneth Warren, chairman of the trade and industry select committee, which took evidence from Young yesterday, obviously thought so. Pointing to the report's reference to the sale price of the company as a mere £150, Warren remarked: "Perhaps it was the deal of the century."

Colour shift

While Buckingham Palace has made its yellow drawing room a permanent artist's studio ready for the latest royal portrait painter, Clarence House is not so blessed with artistic facilities. Staff have perfected the art of doubling up as stage-hands and transforming the garden drawing room into a studio, then switching the furniture back for guests.

"The room is used by the family," says royal portrait painter Michael Noakes, whose portrait to mark the 58th birthday of the Duchess of Kent was unveiled yesterday. "It's charming, with plenty of light," he says. "It has also got enough room for painting a large portrait." However, he still had to indulge in some nifty artistic footwork. "I had painted the duchess with her hair bunched on top of her head," he recalls, "and then she got it cut. I had to redo it."

● British troops in the Gulf are being spared at least one irritation of life in the desert: insect bites. Welsh businessman Tom Lowes asked the MoD if it required supplies of his company's product *Jungle Formula*, a leading brand of insect repellent. "I was told that they had sufficient stocks for 1,000 weeks," says Lowes. "After a quick calculation I realised I wouldn't have to ask again for 20 years."



SADDAM'S SUICIDE NOTE

President Saddam Hussein's broadcast yesterday had one merit: clarity. In a speech which made no direct reference to President Gorbachev's peace proposals, he reiterated Iraq's claims to Kuwait, defended its invasion of the emirate and vowed to fight on in the confidence of victory. Insisting that "there is no path but the path we have chosen, the path of struggle", he taunted allied forces for avoiding battle on the ground in Kuwait, which he called "southern Iraq", and committed Iraq to "our great battle of victory and martyrdom".

His address spares President Bush or any other member of the alliance the burden of convincing the world that Iraq is not seriously seeking peace. He could hardly have made Iraq's defiance of international law clearer. Delivered while his foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, was en route for Moscow, Saddam's alternately defiant and self-pitying tirade pre-empted the official delivery of Iraq's response to the Gorbachev plan with what seems outright rejection. Mr Aziz, he said, would take to Moscow details of Iraq's political efforts: were these rejected, that would simply expose allied "deceptions". In Moscow, officials emphasised that President Gorbachev is in no mood either to listen to Mr Aziz repeating a by now well-rehearsed litany, or to negotiate. Nothing but a pledge of immediate, unconditional withdrawal would carry weight.

To the outside world, Saddam would appear to have lost any sense of what constitutes his own, or Iraq's, self-interest. The speech reads indeed like a suicide note, characteristically devoid of concern for the suffering a ground war will inflict on thousands of Iraqis. Between the lines, there are indications that Saddam genuinely believed last Friday that by pronouncing the word "withdrawal" he had done all that was needed for the alliance to disband. His

references to peace were solely in the context of that conditional pronouncement and of his speech last August linking Kuwait with the future of Palestine.

Saddam seems to have concluded that, denied the chance of snatching diplomatic victory from the jaws of military defeat, there is no further point in diplomacy. Bitterly criticising President Bush and King Fahd for rejecting Iraq's ambiguous and condition-ridden proposals, he said that this demonstrated that "they want us to surrender". If he did not allude to the subsequent Soviet plan, that was probably because he regards acceptance as a first stage along the route to surrender. Such is his record of deviousness that the allies were fully justified in attaching counter-conditions to those implicit in the Soviet proposal — above all, in insisting on a quick-march retreat lasting days, not weeks, the immediate handover of prisoners-of-war and civilian Kuwaiti hostages, and acceptance of all 12 UN resolutions.

Saddam spoke as one who sees the precipice ahead. But in this most political of wars, yesterday is unlikely to be Saddam's last bid to divide the alliance. The speech contained hints that Saddam believes that he still holds trumps, that a combination of American aversion to military casualties, and popular Arab sentiment will — after a few savage days of ground combat — force the allies to settle on his terms.

If that is the measure of his contact with reality there is, as John Major said yesterday, "no glimmer of hope" for diplomacy. There has probably been none since Iraq invaded Kuwait last August. The allies have gone the last mile, and then another, only to hit the wall of Saddam's intransigent megalomania. A full ground invasion now awaits President Bush's word.

LORD YOUNG'S REPUTATION

A public figure under fire occasionally defends himself with a phrase which, at a stroke, proves his critics' case. So it was yesterday with Lord Young. Accused by MPs of having "seriously misled" the House of Commons by withholding important facts about the sale of Rover to British Aerospace, Lord Young charged the MPs concerned with playing "party politics".

At first sight, the retort is mysterious. The trade and industry select committee, which made the criticism, is cross-party. A majority of its members is Conservative. Yet it was unanimous in its condemnation of the former industry secretary, the two MPs most favourable to him amongst its members having strangely failed to turn up to register their dissent. How can its report be dismissed as "party politics"?

What Lord Young really means, presumably, is that the charges are political. Let the case for him be put more eloquently than he has managed. Rover had to be sold, or it would have gone bust. If it had gone bust, the country would have lost output, exports, jobs. British Aerospace was the only possible buyer. BAE, however, insisted on striking what the committee calls a "hard bargain". The sale only went through because Lord Young attached sweeteners to the deal, in the form of deferred payments and covert subsidies. If these had become known to the European Commission in Brussels, it would have blocked the sale on anti-competition grounds.

What Lord Young called the "deal of the decade" could only go through if the Commission was deceived as to its true terms. To make sure that it stayed deceived, the truth had also to be withheld from the House of Commons. Rover today is more successful than anybody dared hope three years ago, and what is good for Rover is good for the United Kingdom. Even the Commons committee concluded that "the sale of Rover Group to British Aerospace may well have been the best solution".

That the ends were desirable does not

vindicate the means. The first charge against Lord Young is that he mismanaged his department. The administrative practices of the Department of Trade and Industry, revealed in the select committee's report, would shame a corner sweetshop. For the DTI to refuse to hand over to the committee certain documents, as it did, is wrong. For it to be unable to do so because they were not sequentially numbered, and so could not be found, is ludicrous. With 12,000 civil servants, the DTI ought to be able to run a filing system. Under the British constitution, ministers answer for their departments. They may not feel obliged to resign over every departmental error, but Lord Young cannot shrug off so palpable a shortfall in basic competence.

The gravest charge against him lies in his behaviour towards the Commons. The committee's conclusion that it was "seriously misled" is unequivocal. To one who had never been elected to Parliament, this deception may not have seemed a heinous offence. But to write (as Lord Young did) to the chairman of a large public company to discuss just how to deceive the House of Commons was stretching things. Even now, the committee complains, Parliament remains in ignorance of the full facts.

The answer is constitutional, and fundamental. The fact that Parliament is often neglectful in discharging its function of monitoring the executive does not detract from the importance of this function. John Profumo lost office not because of his sexual misbehaviour, but because he lied to Parliament. When Mrs Thatcher narrowly survived the Westland affair, the debate was on whether Parliament had been deceived. MPs are rightly jealous of their de facto prerogative to hound a minister from office, without which ministers could safely ignore the elected representatives. Only a peer could be so insensitive as to ignore it. Had Lord Young remained a minister, yesterday's report would surely have forced his resignation. All he has lost is his reputation.

POSTSCRIPT TO 1989

The gilded statue of the late Enver Hoxha which was torn down by demonstrators in Tirana on Wednesday proved to be hollow. It would be hard to conceive of a better metaphor for the condition of Albania today. A nation of three million slaves unchained itself, only to discover that the power which had held them forcibly in check for 40 years has no ultimate sanction. The shots over the heads of the crowds yesterday were fired by soldiers who have lost their power to intimidate. President Ramiz Alia, Hoxha's heir, has declared personal rule, but he will be lucky to survive until the multi-party elections planned for March 31.

Two complicating factors enter into Albania's political equation: personality and religion. Mr Alia decided last year to distance himself from the previous leadership. Hoxha's widow Nexhmije and other Stalinist diehards were disgraced. He must be hoping to lead the country through the coming phase of transition, just as President Iliescu of Romania remains in office. But Mr Iliescu joined the opposition while Ceausescu was still in power; Mr Alia, though a reformer, has no such distinction.

Banners calling for Mr Alia's resignation only appeared in Tirana this week, a delay which may have led him to suppose that he was popular enough somehow to survive the general collapse of the regime. Yet the prospect of a repetition of last year's massacres in Tirana may persuade the Albanian workers' party from office.

Religion is the other wild card. Mr Alia, like most of his immediate entourage, belongs to the Muslim mafia which has

dominated Albanian politics ever since the communist takeover. Opposition, which was supposed by the West to be negligible until last year, has come most forthrightly from the Catholic north of the country. The communists may try to inflame religious and ethnic conflicts in Albania, as they have been inflamed in Yugoslavia, in order to hold on to power. Both Hoxha in his day and Mr Alia more recently have sought to incite Albanians to support their kinsmen in Kosovo against Serbia.

Most likely, however, the Albanians have now had enough. If there were to be bloodshed now, Mr Alia would have no chance at all of winning a popular constituency. A reign of terror would be brought to an end sooner rather than later, if the reluctance of the army to shoot so far is any guide. There is, unfortunately, no alternative administration waiting in the wings. Leaders of the main opposition party, the Democrats, have been accused of links with the communists.

The final act of the Balkan tragedy which began at Yalta nearly half a century ago is now being played out in this tiny country, not much bigger than Wales. No foreign power can influence the denouement, but the West must take its share of the responsibility for having left this little nation to Stalin's satraps. A truly free election next month is virtually impossible as long as the communist apparatus remains in place. No tears, therefore, should be shed for Mr Alia. Once the long ordeal of Hoxhaism is finally over, however, help from the European Community should be at hand.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Quest for alternatives to poll tax

From the chief Opposition spokesman on the environment

Sir, Much as I enjoyed your leader today on the government's difficulties with the poll tax, I cannot allow your allegation that Labour has yet to come up with a "robust replacement" of the poll tax to go unchallenged.

Last July we published, not the "various projects" which you castigate, but a fully comprehensive and carefully phased plan to replace the poll tax by "fair rates". I seem to remember you commending it in leading articles twice within one week (November 20 and 24, 1990). Indeed, the first phase of our plan — to go back to the rates on the existing register — is precisely the course of action you press on the government in today's leader.

I can confirm that we would happily support the government if they wished to bring in a bill to achieve this. My only condition would be that they allowed their own back benches and ministers a free vote — as it would surely be quite wrong for Tory MPs to be whipped against their own manifesto commitment to abolish the rates, given how many of them have expressed bitter hostility to the taxation of property.

Yours sincerely,

BRYAN GOULD,
House of Commons,
February 20.

From Sir George Gardiner, MP for Reigate (Conservative)

Sir, Your editorial on poll tax reform (February 20), calling for a straight return to the old domestic rating system, is uncharacteristically

doctrinaire. Apart from a few local government officials, I find almost no one arguing for a return to the old rates, with all their obvious unfairnesses.

What I do find is almost universal acceptance of the principle that everyone using local services should pay something towards their cost, but that the better-off should pay more than those on average incomes. There is no argument over substantial rebates for those on income support.

A new charge based on the size of domestic property, with a capitation top-up or multiplier based on the number of adults living in the property, is worthy of more serious consideration than you appear to have given it.

It need not entail returning to old valuations (which were grossly outdated), nor even relying on valuations at all. More practical would be a calculation based on square footage, relying on self-assessment with random spot-checks. Anyone unable to measure the floor space of their own home could ask their council to do it for them, at a charge to cover cost.

I understand Mr Heseltine hopes soon to rule out some of the more far-fetched options for reform, and I would expect your proposal to return to the old discredited system, with its antiquated calculations, to be included among these. Let us hope that then you will give more rational consideration to the range of options that remain.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE GARDINER,
House of Commons,
February 20.

Source of cash for schools that opt out

From the Chief Education Officer for Lancashire

Sir, You reported yesterday, and confirm today, that the environment and education secretaries are seeking a big increase in grant-maintained schools, apparently on the grounds that this would automatically ease the pressure on councils to raise cash locally and should lead to smaller community charge bills. I trust that neither Michael Heseltine nor Kenneth Clarke believes this to be the case, since nothing could be further from the truth.

The Department of Education and Science recovers in full the cost of annual maintenance of each grant-maintained school from the local education authority to which it is used to belong. Cash for this has to be found from the council's three main sources of revenue — namely, the community charge (39 per cent for a typical county), the council's share of the national non-domestic rate (36 per cent), and revenue support grant (25 per cent).

A recent DES proposal to claim for grant-maintained schools a share

of central costs on an average rather than actual basis could lead some councils to have to raise even more cash locally for the opted-out schools than they are spending on their own services.

If opting-out catches on, the prospect of local councils having to provide funds for a big increase in grant-maintained schools for which they are not accountable is one of many reasons for welcoming the government's review of the finance and structure of local government.

Local government needs clearly stated responsibilities, a system of finance that allows councils to account for the money they spend, and then to be allowed to get on with the job. The review should move quickly to open discussion of options based on these principles between government departments and local authority representatives.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW COLLIER,
Chief Education Officer,
Lancashire County Council,
PO Box 61, County Hall,
Preston, Lancashire,
February 21.

Railway bombs

From Mrs Eleanor H. Lewin

Sir, I congratulate you on using the word "bang" for the IRA in the headline of your report on Monday's bombs — a big improvement on "active service unit". Those words have been cleverly chosen by the IRA to legitimise their activities by presenting themselves as "freedom fighters", knowing that for many people the label freedom fighter enables you to get away with anything.

Yours truly,
ELEANOR H. LEWIN,
3 Colman Court,
Christchurch Avenue,
Finchley, N12,
February 20.

Equity and ANC

From the General Secretary of the British Actors' Equity Association

Sir, You are mistaken in believing that the change in attitude by the African National Congress to the cultural boycott of South Africa has "put Equity... on the spot" (Daily February 15). Although, of course, many of our members have sympathised with the boycott, it is not the policy of the union to support it as our constitution precludes such support being given.

We discourage the members of our multi-racial union from going there to work, largely because we cannot fully protect them. We do not agree to the sale of our members' recorded works to South African television and radio because it is felt that, if a country which practises

institutionalised racialism was to become a major purchaser of British material, this would influence the pattern of employment for British black and Asian artists.

Consequently a change in the direction of the ANC is not of itself enough to lead us to change our policies and we have no plans for an early referendum on this matter.

The end of apartheid will undoubtedly mean the end of the policies that Equity has pursued for many years and I am sure that every one of our members will welcome that day when it comes.

Yours faithfully,
PETER PLOUVIEZ,
General Secretary,
British Actors' Equity Association,
8 Harley Street, W1,
February 15.

Saddam's war machine

From Air Commodore C. A. Alldis (ret'd)

Sir, In your leading article on "Curbing the arms trade" (February 4) you write, "And public opinion has been shocked by the sight of the allies' own forces being killed by equipment which the West has sold to Iraq."

I am puzzled by this assertion, which does not seem to me to accord with the facts as reported by the UK media in their extensive coverage of the Gulf war progress.

Like most members of the public I have no expert knowledge of the equipment of the Iraqi armed forces, but from media reports my impression is that the Iraqi navy was Soviet-built, the Iraqi army's missiles and battle-tanks are of Soviet origin, and French Mirage and a much larger number of Soviet aircraft form the majority of the Iraqi air force.

Other than the French, the major Western contributors to Iraq's military potential seem to be German chemical-warfare expertise, and

British shelters for aircraft parked on airfields. Without wishing in any way to minimise the evil chemical warfare threat, it would not exist without Soviet delivery systems, and the British shelters are hardly offensive weapons in themselves.

Is not the truth, therefore, that Iraq's military power is overwhelmingly Soviet and French made? If so, would it not be better to acknowledge this fact rather than attribute the responsibility to unspecified countries in "the West" which, apart from France, would seem to have played a relatively small part in the Iraqi build-up?

Yours faithfully,
C. A. ALLDIS,
Tudor Cottage, Oxshott Way,
Cobham, Surrey.

From Mr Leslie Carr

Sir, I am fed up with reading or hearing the word "elite" every time the Iraqi Republican Guard is mentioned.

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE CARR,
4 James Close,
Romford, Essex.

Rise in long-term jobless deplored

From the Director of the Employment Institute

Sir, Your front page report (February 20) that long-term unemployment is once again rising is a matter for extreme concern.

Any rise in unemployment is unwelcome but it is well established by economic research that while higher short-term unemployment at least offers a pay-off in the form of lower wage inflation, more long-term unemployment serves no useful purpose.

The long-term unemployed — those without jobs for more than a year — experience atrophy of their skills and enthusiasm, become unattractive to employers and thus find it increasingly difficult to be considered for those job vacancies which are available.

They are effectively excluded from the labour market, play almost no role in restraining the behaviour of wage bargainers and, as was discovered after the last recession, are not easily re-absorbed into the workplace even during periods of recovery and growth.

It is widely predicted that the disciplines of ERM (exchange-rate mechanism) membership will result in between 2½ million to 3 million unemployed. Many commentators seem resigned to the prospect of unemployment remaining at such a high level for a period of years until Britain's "core" inflation rate is reduced to that of our major European competitors.

The likely corollary of this, however, will be a wasteful build-up of long-term unemployment of the kind experienced in the first half of the 1980s.

The government must seek to avoid such an outcome by ensuring that from now on every unemployed person is offered training or a work placement by the time they move from short-term into long-term unemployment.

This would require expenditure by the Department of Employment of at least £1 billion more than currently planned, but by the same token the Treasury would save about £8,000 a year for every person no longer long-term unemployed.

A policy of this kind would eventually be self-financing and

should be implemented without delay.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN C. PHILPOTT,
Director, Employment Institute,
Southbank House,
Black Prince Road, SE1.

From Mr Jeremy Puley

Sir, I understand that unemployment among accountants is at the highest level for 18 years. As an unemployed accountant aged 46 I have been looking for new employment for 11 months: never have my prospects seemed more bleak.

The government, I believe, is ideologically opposed to legislation against age discrimination. Mr David Wainick is due to move second reading of a private member's bill in Parliament on March 1, the purpose of which is to ban age limits in recruitment advertising. Such a measure is needed as a first step towards safeguarding the employment prospects of older people.

In the United States of America, where age discrimination has been unlawful since 1967, the unemployment statistics are significantly different from those in the United Kingdom in respect of the age distribution of the unemployed. Figures supplied by the embassy show that in the United States the unemployment rate in the age group 45 to 64 is only three fifths the national average.

In the United Kingdom, on the other hand, as the latest issue of *Social Trends* shows, unemployment rates do not diminish with age, but instead the incidence of long-term unemployment grows alarmingly. Males in the age group 50 and above make up 30 per cent of the long-term unemployed. Indeed, 60 per cent of unemployed males in the group 50 to 59 have been unemployed for more than a year and 38 per cent for more than three years. These figures are the statistical face of a human tragedy.

I believe the government should urgently reconsider its policy on age discrimination. In the absence of a Bill of Rights, I feel my rights should be protected by law.

Yours faithfully,
J. J. PULEY,
344 Kenton Lane,
Harrow, Middlesex.

Evangelism and Jews

From the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews

Sir, The letters from the general director of the Church's Ministry among the Jews in Britain, and the executive director of Jews for Jesus in the United States (February 13) will heighten the anxiety of the Jewish community in this country regarding missionary activity.

It is a fallacy to suggest that one can be both a Jew and a Christian. Throughout history those who have become converted to Christianity have, immediately, or after a lapse of time, ceased to be Jewish. The separation of Christianity from Judaism in the first century may have been a tragedy; it was, alas, inevitable.

But this is ancient history and over the centuries the Jewish people have endured great suffering, culminating in the Holocaust. The situation today in this country is that the majority of people are non-believers. The Christian Churches should concentrate on them, as part of the Decade of Evangelism, and seek to increase the Christian section of the population — without targeting Jews or those of other faiths.

Fortunately, this is a view held by many leading churchmen, both Catholic and Protestant, including the Anglican community. The Rt Rev David Sheppard, in a presidential address to his diocesan synod in 1989, said:

"The prime target of the Decade of Evangelism must be those who have lapsed from faith or never known what it is to believe in God. That gives us a huge mission field in every part of England."

The Catholic Church has been equally forthright. A decade and more ago, the Vatican called for the abandonment of any and all attempts to convert the Jews.

The activities of the Church's Ministry among the Jews, and certainly of the militant Jews for Jesus, cause great distress, breaks up families and jeopardises better understanding which, happily, continues to grow through the Council of Christians and Jews and the Inter-Faith Network.

Yours, etc.,
LIONEL KOPELOWITZ,
President,
The Board of Deputies of
British Jews,
Woburn House,
Tavistock Square, WC1.
February 15.

Heavy smoker

From Mr Graham Chainey

Sir, That one can now travel on a London bus without being obliged to breathe others' tobacco smoke (report, February 15) is a small victory. There will be a greater victory when one can walk along a London street without being obliged to breathe the choking clouds of carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, hydrocarbons, oxides of nitrogen and other health-threatening constituents of the diesel exhausts of the buses themselves.

A bus spews considerably more pollution per minute than the best chain-smoker does in a day. We should be grateful to London Transport for removing the mote from their passengers' eye: now how about the beam in their own?

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM CHAINEY,
47 St Barnabas Road, Cambridge.
February 15.

Excluding Iraqis

From Lord Hytton

Sir, I understand that the Home Office has decided not to renew the residence visas of Iraqis in Britain. Was there any consultation before the decision was taken? The likely result will be a new set of refugees, who will have great difficulties in returning to their own country.

There may be problems over students whose costs are no longer being met by the Iraqi government. Why could these not be dealt with individually?

The blanket refusal to renew discriminates on grounds of nationality and not of any threat to security. We are not at war with Iraq, but are merely enforcing UN resolutions with regard to Kuwait.

Will the Government reconsider this matter, remembering the importance of preserving long-term good will between Europe and the Arab and Muslim world?

Yours faithfully,
HYTTON,
House of Lords,
February 18.

Praise for Lincoln

From the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade

Sir, I was puzzled by the reference to "the Australian fiasco" in your third leader of February 2. Along with scores of thousands of other Australians and international visitors I visited Lincoln Cathedral's Magna Carta pavilion at the highly successful 1988 World Expo in Brisbane and found it a truly distinguished exhibition, thoughtfully and professionally presented.

I am sure that a great many visitors will have been fired by their experience not only with a renewed enthusiasm for the theme of "liberty under law" so well depicted at the pavilion, but also with enthusiasm to visit Lincoln Cathedral.

On the assumption that the encouragement of such visits was at least one of the purposes of mounting the exhibition, quite apart from all the other pleasures and benefits it conferred, I find it difficult to believe that the net cost incurred could have been quite the unjustified extravagance your leader suggests.

Yours sincerely,
GARETH EVANS,
Parliament House,
Canberra A.C.T. 2600,
Australia.
February 20.

Progress licked

From Mrs Jane Elliott

Sir, Licking stamps is distasteful (February 20); and to make the procedure even more unpalatable are not stamps bought individually or in a strip invariably placed lickside down on the Post Office counter?

Yours faithfully,
JANE ELLIOTT,
The Vicarage,
Angel Lane, Mere, Wiltshire.
February 20.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071 782 5046).



Still available: Dame Shirley Porter is old enough to qualify for a bus pass but has no intention of quietening down

West End show loses its star

Kate Muir meets Dame Shirley Porter, who may be stepping down from life in the headlines — but for how long?

Visiting Dame Shirley Porter is the nearest thing you can get in London to an audience with the Pope in a riding stable. She sits in state wearing a gold ring of knighthood proportions, which you feel you are expected at some point to kiss. The walls of her 18th floor penthouse office are decorated with rosettes, the sort normally attached to horses, but in this case lauding the victories of Lady Porter — Plain English campaign, Lady Porter — Say No to Drugs campaign, Lady Porter — Tidy Britain campaign.

Before the rosettes ran out of wall space, Dame Shirley decided it was time to resign as leader of Westminster Council. She announced her intention, true to form, under the full glare of the television lights, and mentioned at the same time that Westminster's poll tax would be a teeny £174. Loads of publicity later, she was sitting in salmon pink tennis gear, the New Year's Honours DBE in the bag, assessing the high points of her eight-year reign.

"I have proved, I think, that in local government, less is more. I have made it the servant of the public rather than the master, made it more responsible and friendly, and brought in business expertise." She pauses for emphasis: "And I am very pleased I can look all over this country and see sponsored litter bins, when I remember fighting, yes, fighting, with my own planning department who insisted they wanted planning permission for each bin."

There was little mention of selling three London cemeteries for 15p, or alleged gerrymandering by ensuring more council houses were sold in marginal wards to increase the Tory vote. The point is the electorate did not seem to

mind. With pockets massaged by Britain's second smallest poll tax, they increased the Conservative majority from four to 30 last May, and ensured Dame Shirley's exit this April will be on a high. Just as her father, Sir Jack Cohen, made his fortune by slashing prices to launch his Tesco stores (now run by her husband, Sir Leslie), Dame Shirley has made her name by slashing through red tape. She cannot bear bureaucrats. Her nose shrivels up at the thought. "I am not very patient. I can't stand when people are slow at getting things done. When I started as leader, local government was very slow, very worthy, very tedious and very turned in on itself. I found the questioning mind was not exactly loved."

Her Eighties purge of local bureaucracy paralleled Mrs Thatcher's purge of the fat of Britain. She doubts she could have succeeded in streamlining Westminster without the security of a backdrop of Thatcherism.

"She wrenched them out of the 19th century and she upset everybody, all the vested interests around the country. She took them all on." As did Dame Shirley. She put 17 council services out to private tender, sold 6,000 of Westminster's 22,000 houses and flats, and once led a camel across Westminster Bridge to protest about Ken Livingstone's "last straw" GLC rates increase.

That sort of performance differentiated her from the Thatcher school of leadership. She admits to having less gravitas, more of a sense of humour, and a desire to make politics fun. "Mrs Thatcher takes things a little more seriously, I think." She goes on about Mrs Thatcher's general warmth and niceness for a while. One warmly remembered incident was when Shirley took a new road cleaning machine round to Margaret at Number 10, and Margaret got in and played with all the levers. "I admire that practicality. Of course we're not as similar as we are cracked up to be. We were just both strong women in politics. We were both grocer's daughters, I suppose," she smiles, "but hers was only a corner shop."

At this point it is worth noting that Dame Shirley's own fortune, without the aid of her husband's supermarket

Cadburys and watch those fascinating machines with chocolate dripping everywhere, and go on staff outings, and they'd do "Knees Up Mother Brown". Perhaps some of this has rubbed off on Dame Shirley. "My father was a man of the people, and I suppose I've got some of the common touch, too."

What better role for woman of the people than mayor of Westminster? Dame Shirley expects to take over after her resignation as leader, and will probably raise the profile of the post.

No wonder her favourite novel is Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*, the story of the divide and decline of New York. "I am very interested in the concept of how a city dies, the city as a body which gets ill, clogged with traffic, blocked by ageing sewers and filled only with those rich enough to stay there, or too poor to leave. We must make sure we don't get that way and start seeing the violence of New York here."

But Dame Shirley is leaving London to fend for itself without her. At least for a while. "I like new challenges. It takes more than power to keep me interested. You can get stuck in a rut, and you never know what's round the corner, so my philosophy is: be available."

Never a political animal, Dame Shirley was always much more interested in results than ideology. She joined the Conservative party on the night before her selection

meeting as a councillor, and even flirted with the Liberals in the Sixties. You get the impression it did not matter much which party. She just wanted to get in on the action.

"The Conservatives asked me to stand as an MP 18 years ago. You may find this difficult to believe but I'm not really dedicated or ruthless enough. I put my two children before politics then, and I didn't really want to do the hours. Also, I didn't think I was backbench material. I was 40 and I thought that was too old."

As London was to discover, she still had a lot of political life left in her. The woman who had been captain of the golf club five times in her dogooding wilderness years, and a charity organiser, was unstoppable when something larger got in her clutches. "Everything I get involved in I seem to end up running," she says, slightly surprised.

London was not as simple to control as the golf club. Although she has removed the paper litter from the streets of Westminster with her famous £10 fixed penalty fine, the same technique has not worked with the homeless. She blames the human detritus largely on the break-up of the family, not her council. "They expect homes, you see, so many single people, and they should get them, but we cannot provide them here." The buck conveniently gets passed.

Dame Shirley is, however, keen to help those who are genuinely mentally ill and willing to accept a bed. "The problem is that there are empty beds and people still sleeping on the streets. It's a big psychological and social problem; those youngsters get into a cycle of deprivation and look filthy." She seems to be talking from imagination rather than knowledge of the problem. "And then they smell and whatever they need to be cleaned up and moved back to society."

No wonder her favourite novel is Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*, the story of the divide and decline of New York. "I am very interested in the concept of how a city dies, the city as a body which gets ill, clogged with traffic, blocked by ageing sewers and filled only with those rich enough to stay there, or too poor to leave. We must make sure we don't get that way and start seeing the violence of New York here."

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Making of a citizen

An eight-year-old boy faces the rigours of his first term at boarding school — and the glare of the television spotlight

ANYONE who became a school boarder at a tender age will experience shivers of recollection and twinges of sympathy when they watch it happening to Alexander More-Nisbett, eight years old and far from home, as he enters the Dragon School, Oxford, for his first term at prep school. Unlike the rest of us, Alexander has to share the trauma with a television audience.

As one of the 20 children in the television series *Citizen 2000*, whose lives from birth to the age of 18 are being followed annually on camera, he has done his growing-up under public scrutiny. Now his journey from home, a country house near Edinburgh, to school has been filmed, and will be shown on Channel 4 at 4.30pm on Sunday. Alexander has to keep up the new boy's forced nonchalance, saying his hallos and goodbyes and watching the parental car depart, under the eye of the camera. He manages it pretty well, although the Dragon School seems a good deal less frightening than its name — and he does have an elder brother at the school already.

Prep schools are not easily penetrated by television and this is a rare glimpse of a hierarchical boys' world, although, by coincidence, it is being transmitted a week before a documentary shot inside Eton, to which many boys progress from the Dragon.

Is eight too young an age to be sent away from home? Alexander's nanny says so, as she packs his football boots. "Thirteen would be soon enough." His father admits that he hated his prep school — "I vowed no child of mine would ever go there" — but neither parent would doubt for a moment the rightness of repeating the process. Why does Alexander have to go? "Because I did." The only flexibility lies in the choice of establishment, and Alexander's mother is comforted by the thought that they have gone for the best. The Dragon was "the only school that none of my friends ever said a bad word about."

The gamekeeper, to whom Alexander is close, tells him: "It'll make a boy of you." "Who cares? Who cares?" says the apprehensive Alexander with brave unconcern.



New boy: Alexander

At the door of the boarding house, where strangers are being strenuously nice, he naturally looks pretty jumpy. "No, I'm not cold," he tells his mother crossly, "I'm just bored." Lesson one in British dissimulation starts here.

The Dragon seems humanely un-Dickensian. Alexander finds himself in a house of 24 boarders that has bedrooms rather than dormitories, and quite a cosy air. None of this, of course, can prevent the attacks of homesickness. "I am quite homesick at times," he admits, and then, in a confidential aside, "practically every second."

The other perennial problem of the new boy, bullying, rears its head. Even with an older brother to keep an eye on him, Alexander admits he has "quite a few enemies". But towards the end of term these perils seem to have waned. "His homesickness has cleared up," says his brother, as though it was a nasty attack of spots. And a more relaxed Alexander says of the bullies: "I don't think you pick on people if you know how many friends they've got."

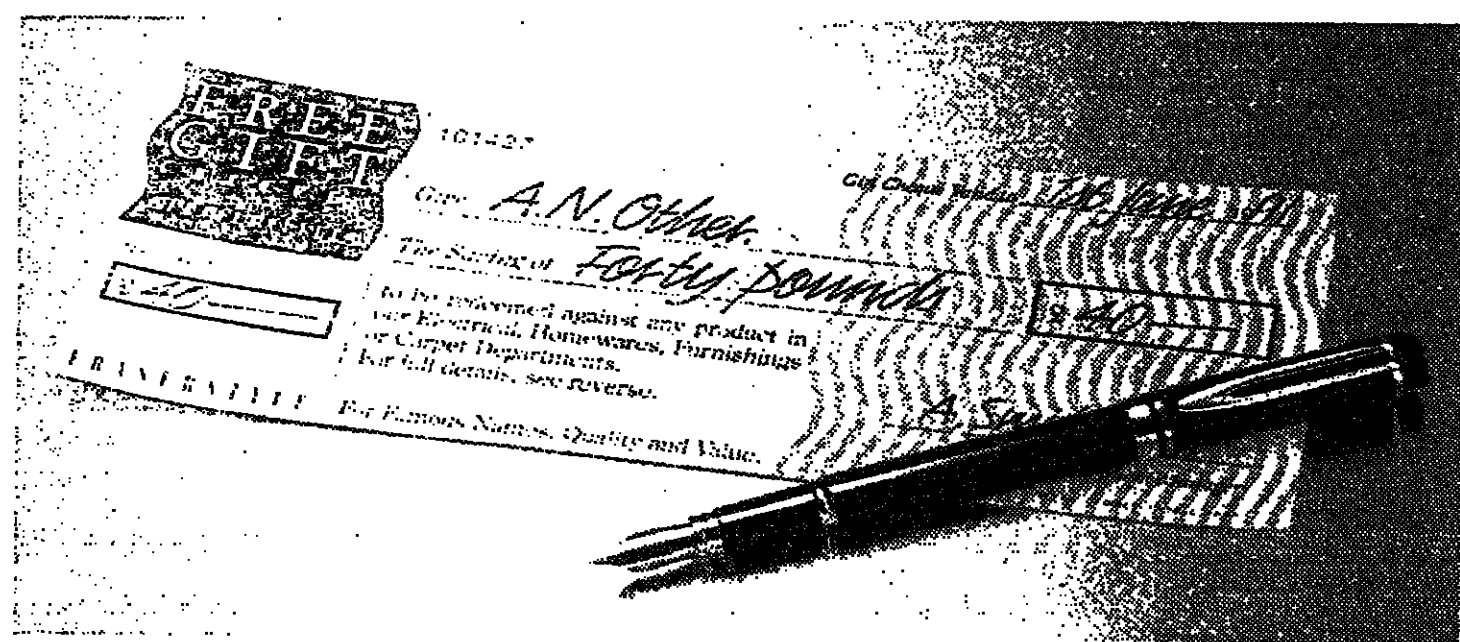
Catherine Freeman, who directed the film for her own independent Dove Productions, has been filming *Citizen 2000* children in school for three years, and developed techniques to minimise the camera's intrusion. Nigel Richardson, the headmaster of the Dragon, agreed to awarts-and-all portrait and feels the result is an honest and genuine picture of the school. "It isn't a documentary designed to take a view about boarding schools," Ms Freeman says. "The focus is the child and the effect upon him of going to boarding school."

What is the effect? As the end of term approaches, Alexander admits to his joy. "I really want to see my nanny and my gamekeeper. And my parents." He adds a spot of eight-year-old philosophy won from the experience. "The problem of life really is that the good bits take about five seconds flat and the other bits about five million hours." Not a bad summary of boarding school — and a useful lesson for later life.

PETER LEWIS

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Rob 'n' Roll
return in style

Marcus Roberts: *Alone with Three Giants* (Novus PD83109)
Jelly Roll Morton: *The Jelly Roll Morton Centennial* (Bluebird ND62361)

A LARGE dose of hyperbole accompanied the first two albums by Marcus Roberts. As a member of the Wynton Marsalis Quintet, the young pianist came laden with all the celebrity trimmings and the now-compulsory references to the "great tradition".

Though they sold well, the recordings themselves, failed to live up to the corporate publicity. The compositions seemed academic, the performances excessively self-conscious. In short, a case of young men trying to sound prematurely middle-aged.

At a glance, *Alone with Three Giants* looks like more of the same. The portentous title and the photograph of the artist striking a solemn pose in a dinner jacket are no cause for optimism. Lurking inside, however, is a fascinating collection of solo pieces which together make up the most accomplished work to come out of the Marsalis circle in the last ten years.

Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk are Roberts' three spiritual mentors, and the com-

his versions are much more than mechanical 78 copies.

There is no point in trying to turn out reproductions of the likes of Jelly Roll Morton. The man himself had the last word 60-odd years ago when he cut his piano rolls and made his Victor recordings with the Red Hot Peppers. Spread across five compact discs, the Bluebird centenary collection assembles all of Morton's output for Victor as a leader. Just in case there are any lingering disputes over his date of birth (1890), the handsome sleeve booklet even includes a copy of his birth certificate.

CLIVE DAVIS

Cowboy Junkies: *White Off Earth Now* (RCA PL82350)
Dinosaur Jr.: *Green Mind* (Blanco Y Negro 9031-73448-2)

FEW groups have taken to heart Roosevelt's advice "Speak softly and carry a big stick" with more enthusiasm than Canada's Cowboy Junkies. They have gone far, and *White Off Earth Now* is a re-release of their first album which, like its more celebrated follow-up *The Trinity Sessions*, was recorded in the group's rehearsal garage using a single microphone.

The collection is comprised mostly of deconstructed blues songs (including two each by John Lee Hooker and Robert Johnson), reworked into virtually unrecognisable shapes by Margo Timmins's glacial siren-call voice and Michael Timmins's glacial guitar forays. With its haunting ambience and deliciously chill sense of melodrama, it is an album with a supremely knowing air that was obviously well ahead of its time when it was initially released in 1986.

Dinosaur Jr., which has become little more than a *nom de guerre* for the multi-instrumentalist J. Mascis, combines a full-tilt power-rock attack with melodies of great acuity in a way that only American groups seem able to do. Mascis selects his musical colours from the palette that has supplied acts from Hüsker Dü and Neil Young to acoustic-mode Led Zeppelin, and though his singing often wobbles worryingly off-key, on *Green Mind* there is a joyous, surging quality to songs such as "The Wagon" and "How'd You Pin That One on Me".

DAVID SINCLAIR



Celebrated: Morton

posers of all 15 items. Astutely orchestrated, Roberts' interpretations range from the boisterous "In Walked Bud" to the sensual "Jungle Blues" and fragile introspection of "Mood Indigo". All familiar titles, yet performed with a rare sense of grace.

Turning his back on the tenor-angelic-a-second style of his contemporaries, Roberts has immersed himself in the more melodic patterns of the stride pianists. He may not be enough of a romantic to bring out the full colour of every item, but thanks to the carefully sculpted arrangements,

GALLERIES

White light offers homely shade

John Russell Taylor on two centenary

exhibitions featuring British artists:

Leon Underwood and Ethelbert White

That the Eighties were a "pluralistic" age in art has become a commonplace criticism, as though such a situation were one of extraordinary novelty. But a moment's thought suggests that diversity of style and approach can hardly be regarded as the exclusive prerogative of the last ten years. Obsessed as the world is these days with centenaries, each new year thrusts before us a group of subjects for commemoration, each, it seems, more diverse than its predecessor. A 12-month period which encompassed, as mid-1890/mid-1891 did, the births of Egon Schiele, David Bomberg, Stanley Spencer and Max Ernst might be accused of many things, but dull uniformity would hardly be one of them.

Those are only a few of the major figures; many lesser artists have already been commemorated or are about to be. The centenaries have been marked of Isaac Rosenberg and Bernard Meninsky, fascinating fellows of Bomberg in that sudden, unaccountable flowering of Anglo-Jewish art which brought an incredible number of artists quite arbitrarily together at the Slade around 1912.

Another notable of that group, Mark Gertler, who was in his own time generally accounted the most brilliant, was also born in 1891, and presumably a major reappraisal of his work must be somewhere in the offing. But meanwhile, attention is redirected towards two other British artists of the same generation, both of them for various reasons further away from the centre of things: Leon Underwood (1890-1975) and Ethelbert White (1891-1972).

Underwood was in almost every respect an odd man out. His activities were divided between sculpture and painting, and he went through an exceptional number of stylistic metamorphoses. He has often suffered, in so far as he has been considered at all by the art world at large, from his relatively isolated and peripatetic career. In particular, in many areas where he was actually a forerunner he has been taken for a follower

because the comparable work of others is far better known, and is unquestioningly assumed to have come first.

This is certainly true of his work with Mexican connections. Every fledgling art historian knows that contact with Pre-Columbian art had a radical effect on the development of Henry Moore's style. It is, therefore, an understandable response to the centenary show of Underwood at the Redfern Gallery to define it immediately in terms of Moore. What people forget is that Underwood taught life drawing in London in the early Twenties, and among his first pupils was Henry Moore. That is one of the reasons — though not necessarily the most powerful — why he has been dubbed "the father of modern sculpture in Britain".

When he discovered the British Museum's holding of ancient Mexican art, he was significantly ahead of his time. By 1927 Underwood was working as an illustrator in New York, and had the idea of retracing the journeys made nearly a century before by the pioneer archaeological artist Frederick Catherwood through the archaeological remains of early Mexican civilisations. In 1928 he actually did this.

Direct contact with this extraordinary, alien art had a great effect on him. This is immediately apparent in his sculpture of the time, particularly the tightly compressed, reeling figures, as well as in the drawings and paintings he made on the spot. Indeed, though it is usual to speak of his "Mexican period" as though it is something neat and circumscribed, this whole new world of artistic experience was something that stayed with him for the rest of his working life.

Nor was it only Mexico's past which enthralled him. He was also fascinated by the life of modern Mexico, and the way its people could live in a landscape heavy with history. This gives some of his other work of this time a look of the Mexican political muralists such as Rivera and Orozco again, something of which the rest of the world became



Watercolour with unexpected strength and charm: "The Potter's Shed" by Ethelbert White, on show in Chichester

aware rather later on. The present show, which is explicitly devoted to work of Underwood's Mexican period and after, makes a good start on re-evaluating him. But there is enough in this small show to suggest that a large-scale retrospective would not be misplaced, centenary or no centenary.

Compared with the cosmopolitan Underwood, Ethelbert White was a home body. If he is remembered at all today, it is mostly for the books he illustrated for Cyril Beaumont's private press in the interwar years, and particularly, perhaps, for the portfolio of ballet prints he made for Beaumont, using the pochoir process of stencilling colour by hand. Some of these, when their subject matter was derived from the more advanced later productions of Diaghilev, suggest connections with, or at least awareness of, the Modern movement. This is something which is barely

hinted at in the otherwise admirable centenary show at Pallant House, Chichester.

It can hardly be because those in charge of this enterprising local gallery and museum do not wish to acknowledge such affinities in

The noisiest talents are not necessarily the most important or the most symptomatic of something significant

what they show: after all, the Hussey Collection, which is the centre of its permanent endowment, includes some of the most distinguished examples of international Modernism to be seen anywhere in England. Presumably, the bias of the White show is because he himself rejected Modernism early on, and retired instead, psychologically at least, into a pastoral British dream world.

He was a friend and contemporary of Paul and

John Nash, Gertler (a very good early Gertler is annexed to this show for comparison) and Nevinson. Indeed, just before the first world war he collaborated with Nevinson on a deliberately provocative Vorticist painting shown at

colours which are closest to tinted drawings have unexpected strength as well as charm, and bring him often within hailing distance of Ravilious. The kinship is even more evident in his highly accomplished wood engravings of rural scenes. White is yet another artist who is unlikely to be recognised as a lost master (which is not quite the case with Underwood). But it would be foolish, therefore, to let him be dismissed completely from consideration. The noisiest talents are not necessarily the most important, the most symptomatic of something significant in the national psyche, or the most pleasant to have and to hold.

Leon Underwood Redfern Gallery, 20 Cork Street, W1 (071-734 2908), Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-12.30pm until Mar 15.

Ethelbert White Pallant House, 9 North Pallant, Chichester (0243 774557), Tues-Sat 10am-5.30pm, until April 6.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

BEATING TIMES: Amikam Toren's obsession with *The Times* as a news medium, an artefact and a concept began around 1983. The latest group of paintings is considerably more abstracted; the material, he tells us, has been appropriated and transformed.

SILENT WORLDS: John Christopherson is one of our authentic poets in paint. He can be a highly expressive abstractionist, but this time he is showing explicitly formalised, magically mysterious townscapes.

SELF PREOCCUPATION: Throughout his long career William Roberts was preoccupied with his own appearance. Most of these vivid drawings are late, when he was his own most accessible model.

William Roberts: 40 Self Portraits Gillian Jason Gallery, 42 Inverness Street, NW1 (071-267 4855), Tues-Sat 10.30am-6pm, until Feb 23.

EDWARDIAN REDISCOVERY: With an artist father and brothers, Harland-Fisher (1885-1944) probably had little job flexibility. However, with such a selling line in pretty ladies, he probably didn't need much.

SELF, SELF, SELF: Almost every 20th-century British artist seems to have made a self portrait at least once. Nearly 40, ranging from Ardizzone to Christopher Wood, show that self-regard can be a real source of inspiration.

FULL-BLOWN: Stanley Spencer's mystical/arabesque art leaves few people unmoved, whether to delight or distaste. In this centenary show he looks more than ever like the greatest British artist this century.

Stanley Spencer: The Apotheosis of Love Barbican Art Gallery EC2 (071-588 9023), Mon-Sat 10am-6.45pm (Tues to 5.45pm, Thurs to 7.45pm), Sun 12am-5.45pm, until April 1.

J.R.T.

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Endless knights seek comedy

THEATRE

The Round Table Lyric, Hammersmith

SEEN as political commentary, this play is fascinatingly prescient. Back in 1985, when he wrote it, Christoph Hein could see that his native East Germany was in terminal decline, and in 1989, when it was finally staged in Dresden, the death-rattle was only weeks away. But already the play seems of more interest to the historian than to the theatre-goer. Seen as drama, it is grudgingly repetitive, the verbal equivalent of a millwheel pounding away at what might be corn but is actually your head.

Like many a better writer faced with state censorship, Hein works through metaphor. In the middle of a muddy stage is a shabby round table, one leg precariously perched on old books. Around it meander members of the Cracked Mirror Theatre Company, complete with grumpy faces and dowdy clothes, like bargain-hunters at a car-boot sale. These are Arthur (here, Artus), his knights and their ladies. They are also the communist bosses of the GDR.

These off-the-peg lordlings are in a low mood. They keep reassuring each other that their idealism has brought order and justice to a chaotic land. Some of them still believe that they may find the Holy Grail and, with its



Off-the-peg lordlings: Liam Halligan, left, Dorian Lough and Steve Ramsden in *The Round Table*

help, create a paradise on earth. But confidence and hope are in diminishing supply, and nobody knows how to restore them. A tournament? A crusade against old, forgotten monsters? A purge of the disaffected? Michael O'Hagan's glum Artus refuses every idea and has none of his own.

The discussion goes round and round, not the most riveting direction for any play; and Hein seems to have thought of only two ways of varying it. One is to inject conflict in the form of Mordret, in Dorian Lough's performance a surly youth in a biker's jacket. The

other is to introduce tension in the guise of a Lancelot who spends the first half being talked about but never actually appearing. But both turn out to be as predictable as everybody else. Mordret says aggressively apathetic things and then says them again. Christopher Preston's moody Lancelot warns Artus that the common people think his followers are "fools, idiots, criminals". And the whingeing of the knights mercilessly resumes.

The only sympathetic character is Gawain, who never materializes at all but sends a letter saying he has exiled himself to the Castle of

the Hundred Maidens. That seems a wise choice, because he thus avoids listening to his peers ceaselessly bang on about their dreams and disappointments, and escapes the dullness of Olivia Fuchs's production. She must have found it hard to believe Hein when he subtitled his play a comedy, but it would have been kinder to the audience if she had tried to do so. As it is, no touch of humour interrupts the earnest intensity of the acting. Was East Germany quite as enervating as this?

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

THEATRE

State of the Nation Great Northern, Hornsey

A SHORT walk along Turnpike Lane brings the intrepid fringe theatregoer to one of London's newest venues. The Great Northern Railway Tavern is a cheerful froth of late Victorian eclecticism; its splendid function room, with sculptural cornices, beautifully stained skylight and a wooden Corinthian-pillared fireplace flanked by mirrored panels, displays a dashing disregard for stylistic consistency and an eclectic belief in the decorative.

To Hornsey comes the Yorkshire Theatre Company with a look at Britain's past decade. Its well-drilled physical humour owes something to alternative comedy,

and much to the more outrageous comic strips; it is zestful, enthusiastic, energetic and, above all, slick and pacy.

To the Dies Irae from Verdi's *Requiem*, three horsemen of the Apocalypse (the fourth is in Iraq) in suits, jockey caps and black masks, gallop on invisible steeds towards God's ten-yearly stock-taking, hoping that this decade will at last signal the last judgement.

Eve Ryman, a successful PR/advertising tycoon, is summoned by Death to account for her life. She depends the fate of humanity. The show depicts her rise, fall and rise again on the crest of contemporary values. Her opening litany of desire, a rhyming list of recent icons of affluence and fashion—American Express, Strlingfords, Katharine Hammett, plays at the Royal Court—has a lip-smacking relish, a soaring hubris, that recalls the Jew of

Malta's mouth-watering inventory of his wealth.

The subsequent satire on advertising has to do little more than quote, virtually straight, the famous series of coffee commercials to make its point—underlined, however, by Eve's brilliant idea to market a non-existent product: image and name are all that counts. Hence "Kraze" ("brand names have to be spelt wrong"), which is invisible and expensive; "anything you believe it is, it is; just as long as it's desirable".

Her fall is engineered by publishing a book that blows the gaff on a Masonic secret society but which is greeted by Rushdie-like outrage. Her resurgence comes with the Falklands war, which she markets successfully. Here the joke of a war commentary in football clichés goes on too long, perhaps because we are living through it again; but the

discipline and style of the three-strong company is admirable, whether spitting a mouthful of teeth over the front row of the audience in a stylised boxing match, or writing into silence as the *Sir Galahad* goes down.

Along the way there are sardonic comments on butter mountains and wine lakes, and nods towards ecology, over-consumption and sexism as if the play were trying to pack in every issue of our current society. Toby Swift's direction (he also co-wrote the piece with Ian Hartley) is happiest when painting sometimes grotesque visual humour with broad, bold strokes. The indefatigable cast consists of Katherine Dow Blyton's PR lady, with the look of a young Sheila Steafel, Andrew Williams (tall and threatening) and Richard Zajdic (short and threatening).

MARTIN HOYLE

CONCERTS

LSO/BBC SO/LPO Barbican Hall/ Festival Hall

TO CRITICISE London's orchestras for the conservatism of their programming would have been utterly unreasonable during the past week. True, not a single new piece was heard in the concerts by the London Symphony, BBC Symphony and London Philharmonic Orchestras, though the high reputations of a pair of fairly recent works, by George Benjamin and Sir Michael Tippett, were enhanced by excellent performances.

Benjamin's *Jubilation*, composed in 1985 and heard in the latest instalment of Michael Tilson Thomas's intriguing Childhood series with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican, is surely one of the most brilliantly conceived of all children's pieces, and one of the most extravagantly scored. Besides a large symphony orchestra, it demands steel and brass bands, percussion and recorder ensembles, and a choir. It is a subtle and serious celebration, however, governed by commanding elo-

quence of texture, colour and melodic idea.

The concert it introduced thereafter took on a distinctly pessimistic air. Salvatore Accardo's account of Berg's Violin Concerto, dedicated to the memory of Alma Mahler's young daughter, was less precious and more to the point than some, though the LSO lost its earlier keen edge both here and in Mahler's *Kinderlieder*, where the rich tones of Brigitte Fassbaender were compromised by wavering intonation and sense of pulse and a few swoops that indicated too much of a desire to express.

Kinderlieder was followed by music from Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which at first sight, did the BBC Symphony Orchestra's collaboration at the Festival Hall of Schubert's late Mass in E flat, D950, and Tippett's Triple Concerto of 1978-79—the sacred, as it were, following the eminently secular. Yet Tippett's philosophies are sacred in a sense, and in György Pauk, Nobuko Imai and Ralph Kirshbaum's ripe performance the air seemed saturated with his joy in beauty. The concerto's curt ending is still worrying, but in Sir Colin Davis's devoted, instinctive hands its complex and dense mosaic struc-



Benjamin: extravagant score

ture, juxtaposing brassy fanfares, glittering gamelan-like textures, and indulgent melodies, seemed as clear as a sunny Caribbean day. The BBC SO cleverly transformed the character of its sound from one of assured brilliance to one of Germanic ripeness for the Schubert mass, aided by the absence of flutes and by the bottom-heavy balance of the brass; there are three busy trombones and only two trumpets. Though the parts of the Mass are uneven, they add up to a momentous entity, beautifully orchestrated and crowned with a thrilling, *Angst*-ridden Agnus Dei. Despite signs of weakness from the tenors, the BBC Symphony Chorus sang its demanding

lines with great determination, while the sparsely employed soloists of Yvonne Kenny, Alfreda Hodgson, Keith Lewis, Ian Caley and Peter Harvey was a happily unanimous indulgence.

Neither Tilson Thomas nor even Davis has yet attained the near-legendary image of Sir Georg Solti, but strangely that conductor, who on Wednesday at the Festival Hall with the London Philharmonic seemed lacking in lustre and involvement. That may have been partly because of the big Romantic work in the second half. Bruckner's Second Symphony appears rarely in concert programmes and so it was good to hear it at all, though Solti and his musicians seemed content to rise only to the spirit of the moment rather than of the whole. They relished both the passing brilliance of the Scherzo, and the serene, warmth of the slow movement, but failed convincingly to cement together the disparate ideas and events of the outer movements. The finesse of the strings and the general quality of the ensemble, both here and in an otherwise personable reading of Haydn's Symphony No 98, also fell a little short of this orchestra's world-class aspirations.

STEPHEN PETTIT

NEW RELEASES

THE FIELD (12): Richard Harris in *Thirteen* is a brilliant performance, but the film is too long and too slow. (12) Harris in *Thirteen* is a brilliant performance, but the film is too long and too slow. (12) Harris in *Thirteen* is a brilliant performance, but the film is too long and too slow.

MEET THE APPLEGATES (15): Insects in human form succumb to American vice. Lurid satirical comedy from New York. (15) Insects in human form succumb to American vice. Lurid satirical comedy from New York.

MR AND MRS BRIDGE (16): Elegant portrait of an upper middle-class American couple. From Evan S. Connell's novels. (16) Elegant portrait of an upper middle-class American couple. From Evan S. Connell's novels.

THE RUSSIA HOUSE (12): Suspenseful portrait of a man who has been in the CIA for 20 years. (12) Suspenseful portrait of a man who has been in the CIA for 20 years.

THE PACIFIC (15): A war film about the Pacific. (15) A war film about the Pacific.

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CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated) with the symbol (L) on release across the country.

DANCES WITH WOLVES (12): Kevin Costner as the Civil War warrior who leads the Sioux to victory. Over-represented. (12) Kevin Costner as the Civil War warrior who leads the Sioux to victory. Over-represented.

DECEMBER BRIDE (PG): A tale of a strong-willed servant girl, bogged down by a strong-willed master. (PG) A tale of a strong-willed servant girl, bogged down by a strong-willed master.

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TOURNAMENT OF THE MIND



Have you the mind to win an
Encyclopaedia Britannica or Z88
lap-top computer, and prove you have
the 'Mind of the Year'?

Six weeks of fascinating but infuriating
questions set by **MENSA**, each week in
The **TES** and **THES** until March 22.

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● BUSINESS AND FINANCE 23-29
● YOUR OWN BUSINESS 30
● MOTORING 33
● LAW 34
● SPORT 34-38

BUSINESS

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 22 1991

Business Editor
John Bell

BA chief plea over Heathrow

AMERICAN airlines seeking access to Heathrow should offer equal treatment to British airlines in America, according to Sir Colin Marshall, British Airways deputy chairman and chief executive. In remarks prepared for delivery to the Royal Aeronautical Society, Sir Colin said: "We have an influx of folk from various US airlines seeking positions of advantage at Heathrow to which, from our point of view, they are not entitled. If they want to get such, then it seems clear to me that they must be prepared to offer equal elements of value in return."

United Airlines and American Airlines are seeking to buy Pan Am's and TWA's transatlantic routes to Heathrow. The sale has been supported by Washington but has not been approved by Britain.

Century stake

Century Oils, the last of the independent suppliers of lubricants, may face a 110p-a-share bid from Fuchs Petrolub of Germany. Fuchs has increased its stake to 13.5 per cent after acquiring 2.75 million shares in the market at 99.95p and may make an offer for the rest. The shares closed at 104p, up 10p.

Pentland sale

Shares in Pentland Group surged 12p to 82p before ending at 78p on confirmation that it had effectively sold the bulk of its stake in the Reebok International sports shoe business. Pentland emerges with £203 million in cash and 11.75 million shares (13 per cent) in Reebok. The deal will lead to a significant improvement in Pentland's cashflow.

Tempos, page 25

War fears hurt dollar as Saudi boosts sterling

By COLIN NARBROUGH and MARTIN BARROW

DEFIANT words from Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi president, which appeared to make a land war inevitable, were received calmly in the financial markets, only prompting late nervousness about the dollar.

Concern voiced by Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve Board chairman, about credit supply and dollar weakness undermined the American currency. Sterling had a good day after an early boost from a Saudi purchase of £500 million to help pay for Britain's military operations in the Gulf.

Dealers said the Saudi buying, which initially pushed the pound up by a cent and three quarters of a pence, continued during the day, rising to almost £1 billion. With Madrid dealers predicting a fresh cut in key Spanish lending rates, despite a central bank denial, City analysts saw a chance for a further half-point off the base rate in Britain.

Spain is under pressure to ease to stop the peseta breaking through its upper limits in the European exchange-rate mechanism. Though not necessary for a British base rate cut, a Spanish move would improve the background. Though still second from bottom of the ERM parity

grid, the pound closed almost half a pence higher at DM2.9192, having been above DM2.9200. It gained nearly a cent to \$1.9580. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose 0.1 to 94.3.

In the money market, dealers became increasingly confident that interest rates are likely to fall by half a point to 13 per cent, possibly after the trade figures on Monday. Three-month interbank rates closed 1/16 lower at 12 1/16, 12 1/16 per cent.

Testifying before a House subcommittee in Washington, Mr Greenspan said a tax increase to help fund the Gulf war would be unhelpful. Though the war will boost federal borrowing, he said he expects a "fairly dramatic" drop in America's budget deficit in the years ahead.

But he saw "minimal" evidence that lower American interest rates had produced signs of the credit crunch easing off, though he detected signs of upward movement on the money supply.

While Mr Greenspan did not specifically pledge to cut interest rates further, he promised that the Fed would "remain alert" to signs that the recession was intensifying and would respond promptly.

Angus Armstrong, US economist at Morgan Grenfell Securities, read Mr Greenspan's remarks as a fresh

pointer to further easing soon in American interest rates, probably by three quarters of a point in three stages.

In London, the FT-SE 100 index closed up 15.6 up at 2,512.4. City equity analysts believe share prices can sustain the strong performance despite the outbreak of a land battle.

Investment strategists predict a brief lull as some institutions seize the opportunity for profit taking before a fresh wave of buying begins. Roger Palmer, chief investment strategist at Kleinwort Benson, said buyers could be back within 48 hours.

Kleinwort Benson expects the FT-SE 100 index to reach 2,700, by the turn of the year. Alan Jones, director of investment strategy at UBS Phillips and Drew, is more cautious but agrees that the impact of a land battle will be minimal. His year-end target for the FT-SE index is 2,500.

The outlook seems less certain for oil prices. The benchmark Brent crude for April delivery traded virtually unchanged at \$17.45 a barrel yesterday, briefly touching a low of \$16.75, as dealers awaited further news from Iraq. Volumes were thin. The market seems certain to fall if Iraq withdraws from Kuwait.

Markets, page 25



A taste for takeovers: Michael Guthrie says he is looking out for more acquisitions in various leisure fields

Ex-Mecca team buys Pizzaland chain

By OUR CITY STAFF

MICHAEL Guthrie, chairman of Mecca Leisure before its purchase by Rank Organisation last year, has re-emerged on the corporate scene with the purchase of the Pizzaland and Pastificio restaurant chains from Grand Metropolitan.

No price is given for the deal, but Mr Guthrie and his team, including three former Mecca executives, are likely to have paid just under £20 million for the 136 outlets, 101 of them occupied by Pizzaland.

Most are on leasehold sites, spread around Britain's main cities. Mr Guthrie's vehicle, BrightReasons, is backed by the development capital division of Mercury Asset Management. He is refusing to discuss financial details, but more than 60 per cent of the backing is in the form of new equity and the balance debt, which suggests the four have had to put in more than £3 million of their own money.

The restaurants have annual turnover of almost £50 million and probably make about £5 million profit at the operating level. The four include Jeremy Long, the former Mecca deputy chief executive and before that the finance director, who surprised observers when he quit before the Rank offer was successful.

Mr Guthrie says he is looking for more acquisitions in various leisure fields, possibly to include further restaurants and hotels. But he is keen to stay in the middle ranges of the market. "My own view is fundamentally that the popular spend usually in recessionary times remains strong."

Pizzaland came to Grand Met with the purchase of United Biscuits' restaurant business in 1989, while Pastificio was started by the group itself.

Three other small chains, Perfect Pizza in Britain, Wienerwald in Germany and Spaghettificio in Switzerland, are for sale. John Severn, public affairs director of the retailing and property sector, said: "We don't believe the long-term profit growth is there." GrandMet will concentrate on its pub estate in Britain and its international Burger King operations.

Power flotation 'to yield 6.3%

By OUR CITY STAFF

JOHN Wakeham, the energy secretary, is today expected to announce that he is selling the country's two electricity generators, National Power and the smaller PowerGen, on a yield of just 6.3 per cent, valuing the two at £3.6 billion. The decision is expected to be greeted with disappointment in the City.

Today is impact day for the flotation, with the government selling 60 per cent of the two companies. Mr Wakeham has this week been wrestling with the difficult decision on their pricing.

He is likely to opt for a rather lower price than some analysts had indicated. The government and its advisers are encouraged by the rising stock market despite the Gulf war and are making no effort to court the unsophisticated private investor.

The shares are expected to go on sale at 175p each, with both companies floated on the same 6.3 per cent yield. With a minimum investment of 300 shares, investors would have to put up at least £525. The 300 shares come in a mixed bundle, in the rough proportion of three National Power

for every two PowerGen. About 20 per cent of the issue will go overseas and 30 per cent to the private investor, although clawback provisions will raise the amount available to the public to around 50 per cent if the issue is more than 2.5 times subscribed.

Previous experience suggests that the average investment in an issue like this is around £1,700, so the government would need to attract fewer than one million applicants to trigger clawback. This compares with more than 13 million applications for the electricity distribution companies last year, which were heavily oversubscribed with chaotic results, and two million for Rolls-Royce. A relatively low-key privatisation, such as British Steel, still attracted 650,000 members of the public.

The government is therefore gambling that enough private investors can be attracted even at the relatively high price on offer. Recent studies by independent stockbrokers have suggested a yield of between 6.5 per cent and 7 per cent would be needed to get the issue away safely.

Profits fall at Alfred McAlpine

By MATTHEW BOND

PRE-TAX profits at Alfred McAlpine, the housebuilder and contractor, fell 61 per cent to £9.1 million in the year to end-October, as the group's housebuilding division slumped from operating profits of £18.6 million in 1989 to a loss of £1.9 million.

Graham Odgers, the former managing director of Tarmac who became McAlpine's chief executive last May, announced that the final dividend was being halved to 5.8p (11.6p) to make a total of 10.3p (16.1p).

Mr Odgers, blamed the recession, but said the company had stabilised and that he was cautiously optimistic. The shares rose 19p to 240p.

The group made a £20 million extraordinary provision against the value of its equity investment in Warrington, the property company. Warrington shares have fallen from over 90p last year to 7p. Total extraordinary provisions of £39.4 million were offset by a £36.7 million surplus, created by a revaluation of its mineral reserves.

Tempos, page 25

Saatchi's share price dives on restructuring

By MARTIN WALLER

THE share price of Saatchi & Saatchi, the troubled advertising agency, virtually halved on the long-awaited publication of the company's controversial restructuring plan.

The plan, now the subject of agreement between the banks, the ordinary shareholders and investors in convertible Eurobonds, provides a financial lifeline without which the agency would probably have collapsed in the hard times ahead for the industry.

There had been fears that the complex package, well-signalled to the market beforehand and expected earlier this week, had run into a last-minute hitch. Holders of the various classes of shares will vote at an extraordinary meeting next month.

Its two main planks are the conversion of the Eurobonds and the UK preference shares into new ordinary equity and a £55 million underwritten rights issue.

This is of seven new shares for every 12 held, both by the

existing ordinary holders and by the other investors upon conversion, at 10p. The terms sent the share price abruptly lower, although a rally left it to end 10 1/2p lower at 16 1/2p. The package was largely welcomed by the market, however.

Another package, involving replacing the convertibles and preference shares with a mixture of new ordinary and preference shares, failed after opposition from the Euroconvertible holders.

Leading the opposition were St James's Place Capital, investment vehicle of Lord Rothschild, and ESL Partners, of Dallas, which wanted further dilution of the ordinary shareholders, and which objected in particular to the terms of a £20 million bridging loan from Donaldson Lufkin & Jenrette, Saatchi's American adviser.

In addition to the rights issue, the management is putting in £5 million for new equity. Robert Louis-Dreyfus, the chief executive, subscribes

for £1 million of this and is underwriting the balance.

Euroconvertible holders will be offered seven new ordinary shares for every two held, while UK preference holders will get 13 new shares for every ten they hold. ESL and St James's will underwrite £17.5 million and £16 million of the rights issue respectively. A group co-ordinated by SG Warburg, Saatchi's merchant bank, will underwrite the rest.

For their part, the banks are putting forward new facilities totalling £50 million, significantly less than the equity injection. The effect will be to dilute existing ordinary shareholders to about 18 per cent of their existing holdings. In return, the restructuring wipes out the £211 million the group would have to find at the end of next year to pay back the Euroconvertible holders.

The Saatchi brothers, Maurice and Charles, have agreed to take up their rights.

Comment, page 25

Ritblat agrees £135m buy

By MATTHEW BOND

BRITISH Land, the property company run by John Ritblat, has taken the cost of its two-year spending spree on supermarkets to £430 million with a £135 million deal to acquire the freeholds of 15 J Sainsbury supermarkets.

The sale and leaseback is the third such deal that British Land has agreed with J Sainsbury and takes its total holding of Sainsbury supermarkets to 48. British Land also has about 30 Gateway

stores that it bought from Isaacles last May. To make the latest deal, British Land used £26.25 million of cash from its existing resources and £78.75 million of convertible capital bonds. J Sainsbury yesterday placed these capital bonds with a range of buyers through SG Warburg, including Mr Ritblat, British Land's chairman, who bought £2 million nominal.

The bonds carry a coupon

of 8.625 per cent, which is below the initial yield of the sale and leaseback. J Sainsbury will pay British Land an initial £2.5 million a year in rent, giving an initial yield of 9.26 per cent. The new capital bonds, which mature in 2011, are convertible initially into exchangeable redeemable preference shares and then into ordinary shares at 350p a share.

Comment, page 25

The Blue Arrow trial

Advisers 'sought help from business'

By ANGELA MACKAY

LAST-minute efforts were made to recruit some of the City's wealthiest men to try to bail out Blue Arrow's record £337 million rights issue, an Old Bailey jury heard.

Financial advisers to the employment agency made hurried telephone calls to Lord Weinstock, chairman of GEC, to Hanson Group and to Robert Maxwell, the publisher. A merchant banker told the jury, however, that when the moves failed, a plan was put in motion for the bankers and brokers advising Blue Arrow to buy millions of pounds worth of shares themselves.

David Roper, a vice-president with Dillon Read, Blue Arrow's American adviser, which was underwriting part of the rights issue to fund the purchase of

Manpower, told the jury yesterday he was assured the plan was legal.

Mr Roper said he had gone to a meeting at County NatWest's City headquarters expecting a celebration, but was told take-up of the rights was only 38 per cent and not the expected 70 per cent. He said everyone was asked to call personal contacts and try to encourage investment in Blue Arrow.

He said a proposal was put forward that County, Phillips & Drew and Dillon Read should take up additional rights. Mr Roper said: "Someone asked if it was permissible. Mr Nicholas Wells said this point, the late take-up, had been checked by lawyers." He added the proposal left him feeling "very uneasy".

County NatWest, the merchant bank; NatWest Investment Bank, its parent; UBS Phillips & Drew Securities, the

broker; and seven executives all deny conspiracy to defraud.

The individual defendants are Jonathan Cohen, deputy chief executive of NatWest Investment Bank and chief executive of County NatWest at the time of the rights issue; Stephen Clark, group finance director of County NatWest; David Reed, former executive director and managing director of corporate; Nicholas Wells, former County NatWest executive director and a former member of the corporate advisory department; Alan Keat, a partner in Travers Smith Braithwaite, the City solicitor, who advised County NatWest on the rights issue; Martin Gibbs, former director of UBS Phillips & Drew, and Christopher Staunford, former director of UBS Phillips & Drew corporate finance. The trial continues.

THE POUND

US dollar 1.9580 (+0.0095)
German mark 2.9194 (+0.0044)
Exchange Index 94.3 (+0.1)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share 1844.6 (+18.4)
FT-SE 100 2312.4 (+15.6)
New York Dow Jones 2900.74 (+1.73)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 2602.47 (-174.42)
Closing Prices ... Page 29

MAJOR CHANGES

RISKS:
A MacAlpine 239 1/2p (+19p)
Tibury Group 63 1/2p (+14p)
Cambridge Elec 105 1/2p (+15p)
Rascal Telecom 313 1/2p (+12p)
THORN EM 680 1/2p (+12p)
Tevens 830 1/2p (+12p)
M Clark 409 1/2p (+12p)
Guinness 602 1/2p (+10p)
Standard Chart 283 1/2p (+13p)
Falvey Group 212 1/2p (+20p)
Lorand 108 1/2p (+10p)
Frank Org 718 1/2p (+30p)
Rechem 615 1/2p (+15p)
Alumasc 238 1/2p (+21p)
Nu-Swift 810 1/2p (+12p)
Prosted Alex 342 1/2p (+12p)
Edbro 112 1/2p (+15p)
FALLS:
Sema Group 412 1/2p (-28p)
P&P 106 1/2p (-3p)
Kode 112 1/2p (-3p)
Closing prices

INTEREST RATES

London Bank Base: 13 1/4%
3-month interbank: 12 1/2-12 3/4%
3-month deposit: 12 1/2-12 3/4%
US: Prime Rate 9 1/2%
Federal Funds 7 1/4%
3-month Treasury Bill: 5.93-5.91%
30-year bond: 8 1/2-8 3/4%

CURRENCIES

London:
£/\$ 1.9580
£/DM 2.9194
£/Sfr 2.4916
£/FF 191.93
£/Yen 257.09
£/Index 94.3
ECU 10.70201
£/ECU 42.282
New York:
\$/£ 51.5575
DM/\$ 1.9580
Sfr/\$ 2.4916
FF/\$ 191.93
Yen/\$ 257.09
Index/\$ 94.3
ECU/\$ 10.70201
\$/ECU 42.282

GOLD

London Fixing:
AM \$361.90 pm \$362.25
close \$361.60-362.10 (£184.60-185.10)
New York:
Comex \$365.25-365.75

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Mar) ... \$18.30 bid (\$18.25)
* Denotes latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

Bank	Rate	Bank	Rate
Australia \$	2.555	Bank	2.405
Austria Sch	21.50	Bank	2.405
Belgium F	23.85	Bank	2.405
Canada \$	2.385	Bank	2.405
Denmark Kr	11.74	Bank	2.405
Finland Mark	10.31	Bank	2.405
France F	10.31	Bank	2.405
Germany DM	3.05	Bank	2.405
Greece Dr	338	Bank	2.405
Hong Kong \$	15.70	Bank	2.405
Ireland P	1.145	Bank	2.405
Italy Lira	272	Bank	2.405
Japan Yen	161.88	Bank	2.405
Netherlands Gld	3.43	Bank	2.405
Norway Kr	11.70	Bank	2.405
Portugal Esc	207	Bank	2.405
South Africa Rd	5.80	Bank	2.405
Spain Ptas	166.64	Bank	2.405
Sweden Kr	10.31	Bank	2.405
Switzerland Fr	2.40	Bank	2.405
USA \$	2.405	Bank	2.405
Yugoslavia Dnr	25.00	Bank	2.405

Rates for small denomination bank only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Customers must apply to their bank. Figures are for 1990 (January)

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Cheltenham & Gloucester looks at Leamington

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE Cheltenham & Gloucester building society is considering a merger with the Leamington Spa building society as a further step in its aggressive expansion policy. Andrew Longhurst, Cheltenham & Gloucester's chief executive, confirmed the society was looking at a merger, but this depended on Leamington's results for 1990. Analysts expect Leamington to be one of the few societies to have made a loss last year due to heavy provisions on its mortgage book. Leamington, however, is thought to have been talking to other possible suitors.

Such a merger would create

a society with almost 1.4 million members. Cheltenham & Gloucester merged with four societies last year, including the Guardian, with assets of £1.33 billion, and is planning to merge with the Portsmouth building society this summer.

News of Cheltenham & Gloucester's plans came as it released its results for last year. Pre-tax profits rose 34.2 per cent to £145 million. Mortgage advances were up 56 per cent to £2.94 billion, while total assets increased 59 per cent to £11.6 billion.

The Cheltenham & Gloucester is the first of the large societies to announce its results, and confirm analysts' beliefs that the societies are weathering the recession far better than the banks, whose profits are all expected to show sharp falls. This is due to the high quality of mortgage assets.

The figures also mean the Cheltenham & Gloucester has overtaken National Provincial to become Britain's sixth largest building society.

Mr Longhurst said he was pleased with the figures considering the problems in the housing market, and attributed the society's success to its refusal to diversify into other businesses.

He said the society would not follow the Halifax's cut in its mortgage rate to new borrowers until there was a further reduction in base rates, since the Cheltenham & Gloucester already offers a 1 per cent discount to new borrowers for the first year.

Bad debts rose from £450,000 last year to £17.2 million because of a rise in repossessions. The society lost £1.3 million in sales of repossessed houses, although it claimed more than £10 million from Eagle Star from indemnity policies on mortgages.

At the end of the year the society owned 1,000 homes which it had repossessed, up from 609 in August.

Mr Longhurst said that the mergers in 1990 had increased assets by £1.8 billion, while £2.5 billion had come from organic growth.

The society has been particularly successful with its interest-only mortgage. Since the start of the year, it has also had overwhelming demand for its London Share Tessa postal account and has drafted in temporary staff to reduce the backlog.

David Horne, the chairman, said he was delighted with the figures but gloomy about the state of the market in 1991. Mr Horne has ordered a recruitment freeze to control costs. He said he was planning to develop LMB into a European merchant bank and is talking to potential partners in France and Spain.



Longhurst: no diversifying

LMB falls 16% on removal costs

By OUR BANKING CORRESPONDENT

LLOYDS Merchant Bank, the stockbroking and corporate finance offshoot of Lloyds, suffered a 16 per cent fall in profits last year to £10.7 million, due to the cost of moving into new head offices.

The bank was hit by a £1.65 million charge for its move across the City to a new development in Chiswell Street. Without it, profits would have fallen only 3 per cent. Despite the fall, the merchant bank is increasing its dividend payment to its parent bank by £2 million to £12 million.

LMB's figures are far better than those of the main bank, which releases its results today. These will show a heavy fall in operating profits owing to a surge in bad debts.

Development capital was the most successful division in the merchant bank last year. The development portfolio made large profits on the sale of shares in Evans Medical, which more than compensated for a sharp increase in provisions against other investments, including Magnet. Overall, the bank now has a £13 million provision against its development capital portfolio.

The bank's telephone stockbroking service also increased profits owing to a 10 per cent rise in business volumes. The corporate finance division, by contrast, suffered from a lack of large transactions, while profits were depressed in asset management because of a sharp rise in costs.

David Horne, the chairman, said he was delighted with the figures but gloomy about the state of the market in 1991. Mr Horne has ordered a recruitment freeze to control costs. He said he was planning to develop LMB into a European merchant bank and is talking to potential partners in France and Spain.



Taking steps: David Michels, left, with Rudi Jagersbacher at the Langham yesterday

Hilton checks in with new hotel despite slowdown

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

HILTON International, the hotel arm of the Ladbroke Group, is to open the Langham Hilton, its new hotel, in London's West End in ten days, in what is one of the most difficult periods for the London hotel trade in the past decade.

The combination of the economic recession and the Gulf war means that some top London hotels are only 30 per cent occupied, and rooms are being discounted more heavily than normal.

David Michels, deputy chairman of Hilton UK, said: "The two worst months for the hotel trade in London in any year are January and February. We are not expecting the London market to start to boom again until September."

He expects the 385-bedroom hotel to be popular with Japanese and American tourists who enjoy shopping in Bond Street.

The hotel will open on March 4 under the supervision of Rudi Jagersbacher, general manager. A single room at the Langham costs £155 plus VAT per night, with suites at £450 and the Royal Suite costing more than £1,000 a night. Mr Michels says prices at the Langham are 10 per cent below those of the Park Lane Hilton. He expects food and beverage sales to account for up to 45 per cent of revenue at the hotel, about 10 per cent higher than usual, as the hotel is well placed to attract shoppers for lunch and coffee.

The Langham Hotel originally opened in 1865 and was the first of the big luxury London hotels. It was right up to date at the time, with unusual features such as lifts and air conditioning. It was a fashionable haunt of Victorian London and a favourite of Oscar Wilde and Robert Browning. The hotel closed in 1940 after bomb damage destroyed part of it.

Hilton International has spent £100 million refurbishing the Langham to its former glory. Nearly all the original features have been maintained and reprints of the original wallpapers have been obtained. Mr Michels said the group had gone for a more theatrical approach than is usual in five-star hotels. The Tsar's Restaurant, serving a selection of vodkas and caviars, will be staffed by waiters dressed as Cossacks. The main restaurant has the theme of "memories of the empire" and there is the Chukla Bar, which will specialise in gins and English cheeses.

Hughes Food's founder resigns

By JONATHAN PRYNN

JOHN Hughes, the founder and 29 per cent shareholder in Hughes Food, the food processing group, has stepped down as non-executive chairman of the company "to pursue private interests".

The shares remained static at 54p on the news, having reached a peak of 156p after the Unlisted Securities Market flotation of the company in 1986. Mr Hughes was executive chairman until December, when he received £100,000 under a compensation agreement that reduced his status to non-executive.

Henry Roberts, the chief executive brought in to turn the company around a year ago, said Mr Hughes' departure was amicable and by mutual agreement. Mr Roberts becomes acting chairman, pending the appointment of a new non-executive chairman. Another non-executive and one executive director are also expected to be appointed to strengthen the board.

Mr Hughes has interests in a number of other businesses, including G Barracough, the private soft drinks manufacturer. Mr Hughes is purchasing from Hughes Food an option to buy Barracough. The consideration for the option is £5.2 million.

Hughes Food, once a high-flying USM stock, has had a troubled recent past. The company is selling its non-core activities to reduce gearing and passed its final dividend last year because of a lack of distributable reserves.

Result cut by 46% at Ward

By OUR CITY STAFF

WARD Holdings, the Kent construction and property group, has announced a 46 per cent decline in pre-tax profits to £3.9 million for the year to end October 1990.

The fall was entirely due to a near halving in profits from property investment and commercial development activities, which slumped from £6.8 million to £3.5 million. The profit in house construction was unchanged at £1 million, and losses from plant hire and other interests were static at £623,000. A final dividend of 2.1p makes an unchanged 2.6p.

Denis Ward, the chairman, said the company will continue to take a cautious approach to property development and investment "until the general economic climate has improved". Rental income continued to grow through the year, he said. Turnover generated by the division fell 32 per cent to £12.5 million.

Mr Ward said the company had responded to the continued slump in house building by concentrating on starter homes for the first time buyer. "Selective replenishment" of building land option acquisitions continued during the year, he said.

Profits for 1991 will depend on the timing of any recovery in the housing market following interest rate cuts, Mr Ward said. First half results "will continue to reflect the current downturn in the market".

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

British chiefs 'falling lower in pay league'

BRITISH company chief executives have continued to slide down the international pay league, falling to ninth place last year in a survey of 20 countries. A decline in the value of the pound, inflation and a weak stock market, which has eroded the value of share options, were the main causes, according to Towers Perrin, a management consultant.

European executives also gained from the introduction of annual bonuses, which have been a common feature of executive pay here for several years. The gross remuneration of chief executives running British companies with annual sales of £150 million averaged £188,000. That was just under half the £387,000 average in America, which continues to top the pay league. Towers Perrin reports a sharp decline in the position of British chief executives in the past two years.

York water up to £1.7m

YORK Waterworks, which supplies York and surrounding areas, reported pre-tax profits ahead to £1.77 million (£1.07 million) in the 12 months to end-December. These are the second interim figures because the company's year end is changing to end-March. Turnover advanced to £6.11 million (£5.2 million), largely due to a tariff increase. Earnings stood at 17p. The second interim dividend is 4p.

SWP to pass payout again

SWP Group, the USM maker of building industry components, suffered a fall in pre-tax profits to £528,000 (£561,000) in the six months to end-December. Turnover climbed to £5.21 million (£4.93 million). Interest payments increased to £54,000 (£6,000), owing to earn-out payments to the vendors of a subsidiary. Earnings per share slipped to 1.4p (1.58p). Once again, there is no interim dividend.

Abingworth climbs

ABINGWORTH's pre-tax profits surged from £104,778 to £595,217 in the six months to end-December on total income up from £625,177 to £1.18 million. Earnings per share jumped from 0.25p to 2.09p but, once again, there is no interim dividend.

During the period, Abingworth, a venture capital investment trust which plans to liquidate itself this year, sold American securities for \$8.8 million, compared with their cost of \$2.5 million. The net asset value reached 361p a share at end-December, compared with 358p at the end of December, 1989 and 379p at the end of June, 1990.

Profits drop at Taveners

PRE-TAX profits at Taveners, the Liverpool confectionery group, plunged from £287,000 to £81,000 in the year to end-August after the company lost £78,000 in the first half. Sales rose 20 per cent by value and 8 per cent by volume, with group turnover up from £10.6 million to £12.7 million. Earnings per share plummeted from 9.41p to 2.3p. The dividend is kept at 1.5p.

Metalcraft incurs loss

STAINLESS Metalcraft, the USM precision engineering sub-contractor, reported a pre-tax loss of £140,855 in the year to end-August (£907,667 profit), showing a recovery from the interim loss of £256,000. Turnover slipped to £8.1 million (£8.15 million). There was a 2.2p loss per share (10.6p earnings) but the final dividend remains 1p. The shares firmed 2p to 40p.

Sara Lee in Hungary

SARA Lee Corporation, the Chicago consumer products group, has taken a majority stake in Compack Trading and Packing Company, a Hungarian coffee roaster, for an undisclosed price. The sale, by the Hungarian State Property Agency, is thought to be one of its largest privatisation deals so far.

Compack is Hungary's third largest food group with annual sales of \$140 million. Sara Lee hopes to use Compack as a platform to export coffee into eastern Europe. In Europe the company owns the Douwe Egberts, Van Nelle and Jaquinto coffee brands among others and claims a market share of 14 per cent.

Germans face tax increases to pay for unification

By WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU, EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

THEO Waigel, the German finance minister, said "a significant increase in tax revenues" was needed to finance unification and the cost of the Gulf war.

The comments are the first public admission that tax rises are needed and come amid rising concern that Germany's public sector deficit could increase beyond current official estimates, which might prompt the Bundesbank to tighten monetary policy. Herr Waigel's reversal on taxation

policy also comes in the light of rising unemployment in the East and mounting financial difficulties for the five eastern German Länder, which are facing bankruptcy.

Herr Waigel, speaking in parliament yesterday, declined to specify which taxes would be affected and the extent of the increases, but it is widely accepted that fuel taxes and value added tax are the main priorities. There is also pressure inside the CDU, the senior coalition party, for a temporary rise in income taxes.

The Bundesbank has said that the public sector deficit is likely to exceed the projected DM140 billion by about DM15 billion. Leading German economists predict an even higher deficit, of up to DM200 billion, in the absence of any revenue-raising measures. Herr Waigel this week presented to the cabinet the 1991 budget, which envisages a federal deficit of just under DM70 billion. However, the budget is based on a number of assumptions that some economists consider doubtful. Helmut Kaiser, public sector economist at Deutsche Bank, said: "I do not know how the DM70 billion can possibly be met. This assumes real economic growth of between 3 and 3.5 per cent, an average of 2.5 million unemployed in the East and has not yet taken account of the public sector wage round."

ÖTV, the public sector union, has demanded a wage rise of about 10 per cent, against a current rate of inflation of 2.8 per cent. Unemployment in eastern Germany is predicted to rise to between 3 million and 4 million in the year.

Unification has also forced German economists to discard their forecasting models as the inherent uncertainty of economic forecasts is now widely accepted, by the finance ministry among others. Herr Waigel said: "The exact costs cannot be predicted or calculated."

Gatt chief calls for hard work

By COLIN NARBROUGH

ARTHUR Dunkel, director general of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), wants the breakthrough in the world trade talks to be followed by hard work behind closed doors.

This emerged in an interview on BBC Radio in which he said that good negotiations were also those held "in discretion". He hoped that GATT negotiators would now be able to get down to work in Geneva before going public with a "good package of results".

The package would be a "combination of concessions and rewards" that would lead to a "more modern trading system".

"We have got over the major hurdle, which was agriculture, and we are going through all the areas of negotiation, starting today with services," he said.

He underlined that, while important, farm goods accounted for only 13 per cent of world trade and that other goods were as important in terms of output and wealth creation.

The round of talks is expected to restart formally on Tuesday.

Delors says rift over monetary union may be unbridgeable

FROM PETER GUILFORD IN STRASBOURG

JACQUES Delors, president of the European Commission, has dampened fresh hopes of a compromise on monetary union by warning that the rift between Britain and her European Community partners over a single currency may be unbridgeable.

He said John Major's plan for a hard ecu alongside the 12 existing currencies faces "many objections" on a technical level. "I'm not sure that we can make a bridge between those who reject a parallel currency and those [like Britain] who propose a hard ecu as the next stage of monetary union."

He indirectly attacked the government and its allies for demanding maximum convergence of economic policy and performance before contemplating a single currency.

M Delors's speeches are becoming increasingly pessimistic as he watches European integration founder on the Gulf war, the GATT trade talks and internal squabbles in the Community's institutions.

He told the European Parliament on Wednesday night that the Community risked slipping back into the stagnation that has persistently dogged its development. He said: "Over the 34 years of its history, the Community has witnessed eight years of dynamism, ten years of crisis and 16 years of stagnation."



Point of view: Jacques Delors, Commission president

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Within a couple of months, the capital of Saatchi & Saatchi will rise from 162 million to more than 1.5 billion shares. That is the most expansive way of portraying an exercise in profound, though thankfully not terminal, shrinkage. The recapitalisation mirrors a current Saatchi advertisement featuring a mouse and a cat curling up in front of the fire with a bulldog. Sadly, Saatchi shareholders are now cast as the mouse, with the heavy parts being played by holders of the euroconvertible and the banks. The international business, however, will survive, with a decent balance sheet and every chance of prospering again in the future.

That huge supply of new shares explains why the Saatchi share price sank a further hefty notch when the much-rehearsed revised restructuring package was finally announced. In the short term, some overseas holders of Saatchi stocks will not be able to take up their allotments, which will be sold. In the medium term, Saatchi shares are likely to remain in chronic

oversupply. The scheme, which will leave the Saatchi brothers with just over 1 per cent of what was once their company, marks an end to a saga of excessive ambition and cleverness.

Before the 1987 market crash, Saatchi stock nearly reached 700p and the group was capitalised at about £1 billion. The brothers' stock market fortunes started slipping when, having created the largest Western advertising group, they tried to buy Midland Bank. The image problem was exacerbated when falling profits showed that management had taken its eye off the difficult business of integrating big agencies and controlling costs.

That in turn evoked the nightmare implicit in low-coupon euroconvertibles. If they were not worth converting, the penalty cost of redeeming them at a compensating premium would cost £211 million cash in 1993 and destroy the balance

sheet. The terms of the rescue reflect the bargaining power of holders of this euroconvertible stock.

Saatchi was saved from this fate because it had time and because the brothers sensibly gave up management control to Robert Louis-Dreyfus, who enjoyed the confidence of Lord Rothschild and other influential shareholders. The underlying advertising agencies are still powerful, though evidently suffering as badly as any from the slump in the industry. The three months to end December will show a loss after redundancy payments, but the group is at least now trading profitably and seems capable of making something like £25 million pre-tax in a recession-hit 1991. That compares with a depressed market value of about £260

COMMENT

million after the share issues.

Under the scheme, Lord Rothschild's St James's Place group will be one of two significant shareholders to be represented on the board. He will surely have an early message. When restructuring his own quoted interests, Lord Rothschild took the opportunity to eliminate the family name from any of the group company names. Surely, as executives of the eponymous original agency have long wished, Saatchi will soon become as anonymous as its rival WPP.

Alive again

The sale and leaseback market for supermarkets is dead, long live the sale and leaseback market. Three weeks

ago Tesco touched its shareholders for the not inconsiderable sum of £572 million through a 2-for-11 rights issue.

One of the reasons cited by Sir Ian MacLaurin, the chairman, for asking shareholders for funds was that Tesco had come to the conclusion that the sale and leaseback market was dead, a victim of the moribund commercial property market.

Try telling that to J Sainsbury, which yesterday announced the sale and leaseback of 15 supermarkets to British Land in a £135 million deal. It is the third deal between the two companies in less than two years, collectively worth well over £300 million.

Tesco can be forgiven for having a jaundiced view of the commercial property market. It was unfortunate enough to choose the private property group Land & Property Trust as its partner in a £140 million

leaseback deal for 17 of its supermarkets. Many months of management time later, ownership of five of the stores is back with Tesco, while Land & Property Trust is in liquidation.

What the Sainsbury deal shows is that where both sides are well financed, there is life after death. Sainsbury gets its money for its development programme and British Land gets a first class covenant with guaranteed upward rent reviews, at a tempting initial yield of over 9.25 per cent.

According to Sainsbury, the sale and leaseback market is very much alive, a fact for which its shareholders are doubtless grateful.

Sainsbury clearly does not regard this deal as the end of the road, although with British Land's appetite for supermarkets probably sated for the moment it may have to look elsewhere for a buyer.

Indeed, Sainsbury believes this deal provides confirmation of a growing interest in supermarket property. Where Mr Ritblat leads, others have followed before and will doubtless do so again.

Day steers Rover on the road to recovery



Sir Graham Day: groundwork for successful cars

THE recovery of Rover has been erroneously predicted many times during the past 20 years. Now, as car sales decline in every leading European market except Germany, optimism is a rare commodity in the automotive industry.

And yet, Rover's production line for the Rover 200/400 saloon at Longbridge, Birmingham, claims a unique distinction: it is working at capacity of 5,100 a week. Since its launch in autumn 1989, demand for the car has consistently outstripped the company's ability to build it.

But it is the success of the Land Rover Discovery model, manufactured south of Birmingham at Solihull, that confirms a fundamental shift in the culture of Rover.

The Rover 200/400 was developed with Honda, the Japanese vehicle maker that has a 20 per cent stake in Rover. The Discovery was designed, developed and put into production by an in-house team in less than three years, against four years or more required to produce a model by European rivals. Rover is streamlining its management systems to incorporate the practices developed during the Discovery programme.

The groundwork for the development of successful cars forming a coherent range was laid by Sir Graham Day, Rover's chairman, well before the company was acquired by British Aerospace.

In place of five models and six engine types inherited by Sir Graham, the main Rover range is now based upon three floor-plans: the 800 luxury car, 200/400 saloon and the re-styled Metro. There are two new engines. The complexity of the manufacturing process has thus been reduced. The Montego, Maestro and Mini models will continue as long as they are profitable, but their assembly is peripheral to the company's survival. Meanwhile, Discovery has rejuvenated sales of four-wheel drive vehicles, which are un-

derpinned by the Range Rover and Defender utility vehicle. Although this strategy was in place when British Aerospace announced plans to buy Rover for £150 million in 1988, City analysts were horrified. The City had paid scant attention to Rover for years. The first fruit of Sir Graham's recovery programme, the Rover 800 luxury car, was enjoying modest success, but there was little to convince outsiders that the company's fundamental problems had at last been addressed. Analysts were more in-

clined to look at Rover's record of losses. In vain, BAE's chairman, Roland Smith, tried to convince them he had done the "deal of the decade." His confidence was underpinned by a careful examination of the model programme, and of Rover's assets. By wiping out Rover's immense debts, the government dramatically enhanced the company's profitability. Since acquiring Rover, BAE more than recouped its £150 million outlay from the sale of peripheral Rover assets. Professor Smith raised £87 mil-

lion from the sale of a stake in Leyland DAF, the Anglo-Dutch lorry builder; £39 million from selling a stake in Isotel, the former Rover computer systems house; £30 million during an exchange of shares with Honda's British arm; and £8 million from disposal of a holding in Land Rover Santana, a Spanish vehicle assembler.

Proceeds from sale of Rover assets already top £164 million, and more will be realised in coming years from property and stake sales. The addition of Rover's assets also provided much needed reinforcement to BAE's balance sheet.

Aided by rising exports, production at Rover has remained a little above 500,000 vehicles a year. Despite its wafer thin profit margins, trading profits have more than covered the interest on money used to buy it. During its first four months as part of BAE Rover contributed £35 million at the trading level.

In its first full year, 1989, Rover made a trading profit of £64 million. Although results for 1990 have yet to be declared, analysts' predictions of Rover's contribution range from £47 million to £65 million. The profit is struck after investment in research, development and manufacturing plant running at £200 million a year.

Chris Avery, an analyst at Smith New Court, the broker, says BAE profits are being propelled almost entirely by its defence systems division, with only occasional help from civil aircraft manufacture. BAE's property interests and Rover, he says, have immense potential, but have yet to come into their own.

The fears over Rover's ability to cripple BAE have, however, been laid to rest. Rover's recovery still has a long way to go. But thus far, its performance under BAE's wing is encouraging.

ROSS TIEMAN
Industrial Correspondent

Alfred McAlpine feels Odgers effect

TEMPUS

THE Odgers effect is in danger of running away with itself. Yesterday it lifted shares in Alfred McAlpine, the contractor, 19p to 240p despite a 61 per cent fall in pre-tax profits and the halving of the final dividend.

But it will take every last bit of Graeme Odgers' widely admired management skill to defy the gravity of the recession tightening around the housebuilding and contracting industries.

McAlpine's pre-tax profit of £9.2 million for the year to end-October could have been much worse. The biggest contributor was construction where operating profits rose by 209 per cent to £13.3 million on turnover up 4 per cent. Mr Odgers believes the division's civil contracts will ensure another satisfactory performance this year. Others are more doubtful and longer term even Mr Odgers admits there could be problems.

Forecasts for this year range between £7 million and £11 million with question marks over the contributions likely from housebuilding and the American businesses. The dividend is prudently halved to 3.8p (11.6p) to make a total of 10.3p (16.1p).

A hefty £39 million of provisions is almost matched

by a £36.7 million surplus thrown up by revaluation of mineral assets.

Helped by this jump in the revaluation reserve, gearing is low at 28 per cent, but is likely to spend much of the year closer to 60 per cent. Scenarists can knock, but with interest cover of 2.4 times the company should weather any storm. But avoid chasing the shares higher.

Ward Holdings

WARD Holdings, the Kent house builder and property development group, has maintained an unusual record since its biggest ever pre-tax profits of £14.4 million for 1988. In each of the two years since then the company's profits have almost exactly halved, this time falling to £3.9 million. In 1989 house building did the damage, but last year property investment and commercial development were to blame.

Ward's policy of concentrating on starter homes has enabled it to keep turnover ticking over, with sales down only 6 per cent to £35.4 million. On the commercial

side, the picture is predictable — slumping sales and profits.

What perhaps makes the outlook for Ward different is its concentration of prime sites in the area expected to benefit most from the Channel tunnel and rail link completions. Lettings at two edge of town developments in Maidstone, Kent, are proceeding at "satisfactory" rates.

The shares are tightly held, with 60 per cent in directors' or family hands. That limits the downside but puts the shares on an expensive multiple in the low teens, given expected pre-tax profits of £4.5 million this year. The usual warnings apply but the Kent factor means that holding Ward shares for the long term should prove more rewarding than staying in most other shares in the sector.

Pentland

IT WAS, perhaps, expecting too much that Pentland Group's sale of its stake in Reebok would be a simple affair given the complex nature of the company's past deals.

However, while the full documentation is not yet available, it seems that the unusual terms, which see Reebok handing back a 13 per cent stake to Pentland, along with \$396 million in cash, provide the British group with a significant improvement to its cashflow, while leaving it with a substantial investment in a company now recovering fast from the drubbing it took in the first quarter of last year.

Pentland ends up with £200 million in cash and a stake in Reebok, currently worth, perhaps, £110 million, to slot alongside the enormous potential of its Speedo international swimwear business.

The effect on taxable profits this year could be negative, but the real benefit will be felt below the line. Although Pentland consolidated £52.6 million of attributable Reebok profit for 1990, the only cash it got its hands on was the £6.1 million net dividend — a yield of 1.6 per cent.

In place of this, it can expect, say, £30 million of interest receivable this year. The crucial question is what Pentland's Stephen Rubin and Frank Farrant will do with the Reebok money. There can be fewer more exciting plays in the market, as yesterday's 8p leap to 78p underlined.

Another victim of the Retirement Gap?



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The above is a fictitious example used to illustrate a typical situation.

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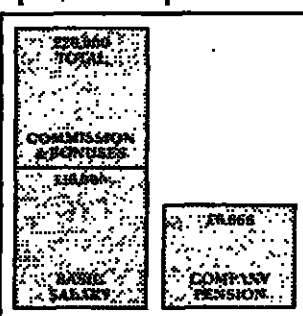
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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Once more into USM breach

USM Magazine, the company that publishes USM Magazine and which is due to publish its first edition under the new title of USM Review in four days' time, ceased trading yesterday and is about to go into liquidation. Ian Restall, the editor and publisher since the magazine's launch four years ago, surfaced last night from a lengthy meeting with Robson Rhodes, the accountant, which he has called in as liquidator, to say: "The refinancing we were trying to push through just did not happen." A prospectus had been circulated among wealthy people in the Square Mile to raise a six-figure sum to put the entire business on a firmer footing. The demise of the magazine means the loss of six jobs — one full-time journalist plus advertising sales representatives and office staff — and leaves a question mark hanging over the future of the annual USM dinner, which attracted 1,100 USM company directors, financial advisers and guests last year. The dinner was expected to attract 700 people on March 7 this year. Several firms in the City, who have paid £700 for a table of ten, are wondering if they have lost their money. "The dinner was run by a separate company, but within the same group," says Restall, who hopes to be able to clarify the position today. He is hoping to persuade Coopers Deloitte, which had co-sponsored the dinner

in the past — this was the USM Magazine's first go-it-alone year, at Restall's behest — to step into the breach.

WORD that Norman Lamont is to break with tradition and go to the cinema on Budget Day, rather than taking a stroll in the park, has led to suggestions as to what he should watch. How to Beat the High Cost of Living is one being proposed, as is The Million Pound Note. Less charitable offerings include Les Misérables and — dare we tempt fate — The Meanest Man in the World.

Lords of fun

A RECENT report in the Daily Express gossip column, still popularly known as William Hickey, that the noble Lords Hanson and King had fallen out over British Airways' decision to cancel all advertising, given current



"You will have heard of our ongoing programme of job reductions..."

market conditions — since such a move is detrimental to Hanson's fledgling Melody radio station, among much else — was so erroneous that Hanson felt compelled to deny the rift. Since the men are close friends — they regularly fax jokes, messages, newspaper cuttings and cartoons to each other — Hanson, permitting a rare moment of public insight into his sense of humour, wrote: "Not only are we still good friends, we are also deeply in love."

THE California Office of Transportation has issued an advisory notice to motorists, warning them to drive "defensively" when they see other motorists shaving, flossing, blow-drying, using lap-top fax machines and, last but by no means least, doing their laundry in portable washing machines that plug into dashboard cigarette lighters.

Farewell to Frank

The City's old guard will be saddened to learn of the death this week of Frank Cradock, one of the more colourful characters to tread the international Stock Exchange trading floor. Cradock was a keen sportsman and, in his day, a member of the Stock Exchange Veterans Football Club. He began a 40-year career in the Square Mile as a broker with Vickers de Cossa before switching to market-making with Denny Brothers and, later, Pincham Denny. Known as much for his love of bewdy tales as for his taste for Piccadilly cigarettes — produc-

ing them with a flourish from a silver cigarette case and tossing them into his mouth — Cradock was also a connoisseur of fine whisky, and sometimes knocked backed four glasses at one go. "He was a well known raconteur," says a former colleague, adding that Cradock's tales were often to be taken with a healthy pinch of salt. The funeral is at noon on Monday at Bow Church, Cheshire.

Basham bounces

BRIAN Basham, the flamboyant founder of Broad Street Group, has not allowed the group's demise to dampen his spirits. Basham, who had the good fortune to sell more than 3 million of his shares in a financial PR group in February last year — a deal that left him £1.3 million richer — is making a new push in the aggressive world of financial public relations. He has teamed up with Barry "Bez" Wedley-Smith and Jenny Solomon to launch a consultancy, thus finally ending links with Financial Dynamics, the group with which Broad Street merged. "He is starting up on his own and we wish him well," says Justin Downes of FD. "There is no antipathy between us." Basham, who has been curiously reluctant to discuss his new venture, was spotted lunching in customary style at the Savoy Grill this week, proving, it appears, that his legendary lifestyle has not yet been dented.

CAROL LEONARD

Portfolio PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card check your eight share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your overall total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won outright or a share of the daily prize money. If you win, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No.	Company	Group	Gain or Loss
1	Macro	Electronics	
2	Quintess	Electronics	
3	TT Group	Industrial S-Z	
4	Diploma	Industrial A-D	
5	Greycoat	Property	
6	Rothmans 'R'	Tobacco	
7	Scotts	Property	
8	Tollas	Industrial S-Z	
9	Ward Edge	Building Roads	
10	Morgan Cole	Industrial L-R	
11	Scott TV	Leisure	
12	Whitbread 'A'	Beverages	
13	Sunday Golden	Property	
14	Cable Wireless	Electronics	
15	Admiral	Industrial A-D	
16	Lovell (V2)	Food	
17	BET Co	Building Roads	
18	Powers	Industrial L-R	
19	Outboard	Electronics	
20	Johnson	Industrial S-Z	
21	Barton Group	Building Roads	
22	Portals	Industrial L-R	
23	Smiths Beach	Industrial S-Z	
24	Tesco	Food	
25	House Of Lenses	Drugs, Stores	
26	Allied Text	Textiles	
27	AAV	Industrial A-D	
28	Midland	Bank, Discount	
29	BT Telecom	Electronics	
30	GNK	Industrial S-Z	
31	Comet	Building Roads	
32	Jacobus (J)	Transport	
33	QEC	Electronics	
34	McKay	Property	
35	Waco	Property	
36	Cayton	Industrial A-D	
37	Costa Virella	Drugs, Stores	
38	Sainsbury J	Food	
39	Fisons	Industrial S-Z	
40	P&O DRI	Transport	
41	Wells Water	Water	
42	Greene King	Beverages	
43	Day	Food	

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend						
Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £4,000 in tomorrow's newspaper.						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN

There were no valid claims for the Portfolio Platinum prize yesterday. The £2,000 will be added to today's competition.

BRITISH FUNDS

1990/91 High Low Stock Price Dividend % Yield

SHORTS (Under Five Years)			
Investment	High	Low	Dividend % Yield
1	100	100	100
2	100	100	100
3	100	100	100
4	100	100	100
5	100	100	100
6	100	100	100
7	100	100	100
8	100	100	100
9	100	100	100
10	100	100	100
11	100	100	100
12	100	100	100
13	100	100	100
14	100	100	100
15	100	100	100
16	100	100	100
17	100	100	100
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30	100	100	100
31	100	100	100
32	100	100	100
33	100	100	100
34	100	100	100
35	100	100	100
36	100	100	100
37	100	100	100
38	100	100	100
39	100	100	100
40	100	100	100
41	100	100	100
42	100	100	100
43	100	100	100
44	100	100	100
45	100	100	100
46	100	100	100
47	100	100	100
48	100	100	100
49	100	100	100
50	100	100	100

FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS			
Investment	High	Low	Dividend % Yield
1	100	100	100
2	100	100	100
3	100	100	100
4	100	100	100
5	100	100	100
6	100	100	100
7	100	100	100
8	100	100	100
9	100	100	100
10	100	100	100
11	100	100	100
12	100	100	100
13	100	100	100
14	100	100	100
15	100	100	100
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39	100	100	100
40	100	100	100
41	100	100	100
42	100	100	100
43	100	100	100
44	100	100	100
45	100	100	100
46	100	100	100
47	100	100	100
48	100	100	100
49	100	100	100
50	100	100	100

OVER FIFTEEN YEARS			
Investment	High	Low	Dividend % Yield
1	100	100	100
2	100	100	100
3	100	100	100
4	100	100	100
5	100	100	100
6	100	100	100
7	100	100	100
8	100	100	100
9	100	100	100
10	100	100	100
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44	100	100	100
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46	100	100	100
47	100	100	100
48	100	100	100
49	100	100	100
50	100	100	100

UNDATED			
Investment	High	Low	Dividend % Yield
1	100	100	100
2	100	100	100
3	100	100	100
4	100	100	100
5	100	100	100
6	100	100	100
7	100	100	100
8	100	100	100
9	100	100	100
10	100	100	100
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42	100	100	100
43	100	100	100
44	100	100	100
45	100	100	100
46	100	100	100
47	100	100	100
48	100	100	100
49	100	100	100
50	100	100	100

INDEX-LINKED			
Investment	High	Low	Dividend % Yield
1	100	100	100
2	100	100	100
3	100	100	100
4	100	100	100
5	100	100	100
6	100	100	100
7	100	100	100
8	100	100	100
9	100	100	100
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46	100	100	100
47	100	100	100
48	100	100	100
49	100	100	100
50	100	100	100

266	173	Kidney Mineral	264	247	-1	84	34	124
267	123	Almond Oil	156	165	+4	-	-	-
268	63	Arbutin (Glycerin)	43	48	+5	33	72	123
269	121	Am. New Z.	137	141	+4	-	-	-
270	84	Resonance	154	-	-	-	-	-
280	136	Coal of Iceland	187	175	-12	-	-	-
284	196	Stank. Laurel Extract	181	21	-	21.3	8.1	5.9
290	334	Stank. Laurel Oil	340	380	+40	8.8	5.3	8.0
334	100	Stank. Oil of Scotland	176	129	-47	7.7	8.3	12.8

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Petrol prices could be on the chancellor's mind at the moment. Kevin Eason tests a frugal 'greener' fuel

Music and glamour: Fiat's ad



Because of the cheapness of petrol, particularly unleaded, there has been little incentive to use diesel. Diesel prices have risen to 198.2p a gallon, or 43.6p a litre, almost the same as four-star prices, because of heavy demand during the cold weather. Diesel has the same heavy oil base as the fuels used in heating. In contrast, the differential on the Continent between petrol and diesel can be at least 30 per cent.

What motorists in Britain have to understand is that, within

Mr Lamont could easily help in his budget by widening the price differential to persuade more drivers to switch to diesel.

Thriving three

AS if we needed to be reminded of the depth of the recession, Car sales refused to budge in three areas in Britain last year. Sales in Warwickshire were up slightly by 2.1 per cent, Wiltshire showed an increase of 2.9 per cent, and sales in Buckinghamshire remained the same. There was no other good news in figures from the Retail Motor Industry Federation as every other county showed a decline. The worst areas listed were Cleveland (-18.7 per cent), Tyne and Wear (-17.5), Humberside (-17.5), East Sussex (-19.1),

All clear ahead

BMW says options available soon on its award-winning 7-series cars will include gas discharge lamps giving better illumination without the dazzle for oncoming drivers or the need to adjust for Continental driving, and park distance control which guides the limousine-length model into parking spots. Also on the way are extra double glazing and "soft-close" doors.

Special. In the United States, however, the revolution that brought personal wealth to the working classes spawned songs about teenagers borrowing their parents' cars to go cruising. Suddenly there were songs about car journeys, from the obvious "Drivin' Home", featuring Duane Eddy, in 1961, to Stevie Wonder's instructive "Don't Drive Drunk" in 1984.

Now the car companies realise a catchy tune can do as much to promote their products as dramatic pictures.

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GOLF

An eagle two helps Mouloud to get off to a flying start

MARK Mouloud, of Wales, was the fastest off the blocks when the 1991 European Tour began here yesterday. He had a round of 67, five under par, to lead the £250,000 Girona Open at Pals, in northern Spain, when he had been expecting to return a score in the low eighties.

"I was all over the shop when I got here, but Sam Torrance and Gordon Brand Jr had a look at me and told me to square my shoulders up," Mouloud said. "I thought this was just going to be a week of practice and my plan was to make the cut. I haven't played since the World Cup in November.

Mouloud, who finished fourth with Ian Woodman in Florida, was surprised to find himself a shot in front of Peter Mitchell and Jeremy Bennett and eight ahead of José María Olazábal, the favourite for the first prize of £41,660.

After starting at the 10th, Mouloud quickly raised his sights, for he holed from ten feet at the 11th, 25 feet at the 14th and six feet at the 17th. The highlight of the round, though, came at the 2nd, a hole of 342 yards,

Card of the course

Hole	Yds	Par	Hole	Yds	Par
1	316	4	10	358	4
2	342	4	11	144	3
3	344	4	12	480	4
4	412	4	13	387	4
5	524	5	14	437	4
6	174	3	15	200	3
7	408	4	16	200	3
8	572	5	17	404	4
9	162	3	18	336	4
Out 3,251 36		In 3,485 36			
Total yardage: 6,736		Par: 72			

where his pitch from 95 yards spun back six feet into the cup for an eagle two.

An eight-iron to three inches at the next lifted him to six under and it was an obvious disappointment when he ran up a six on the 572-yard eighth. His six-iron approach found sand and he missed from four feet.

Mitchell, from Kent, spent his winter rather differently, for he was unhappy with his level of concentration last season, in which he had only one top-ten finish. So he sought the help of a teacher of kung fu.

They worked not on the martial art, but on the mind. "I had to put earphones on and listen to really horrible

music, head-banging stuff, while trying to read a book. It was very difficult, but I had to do something," he said.

With a new swing also being given its first test, Mitchell was delighted to begin with a round which included five birdies. He also had a massive slice of luck when his approach to the 14th, which was well wide, hit a tree and bounced on to the green, enabling him to save par.

Bennett, who won the rookie-of-the-year award in 1981 and regained his player's card last November, has given himself an incentive on his return to the circuit. "I've had a £10 bet on myself to win at every tournament at odds of 150-1," he said.

"I feel I have improved so much and if I get in contention I don't want to be thinking of just picking up a nice cheque, but of winning."

To give himself the best possible chance he spent a week practising at the Costa Brava course and it paid off with a round that contained four birdies and nothing worse than par.

Olazábal, on the other hand, four-putted the 12th for a double bogey and had two more sixes in his 75.

A par five at the closing hole would have given Philip Walton, of Ireland, a share of the lead, but instead he had a seven to drop to three under. He had to take a penalty drop from a bush and then three-putted.

SCORES FROM PALS

FIRST ROUND LEADERS (GB and Ireland): Mouloud (67), Woodman (68), Mitchell (69), Bennett (70), Olazábal (71), Walton (72), Brand Jr (73), Torrance (74), Woodman (75), Mitchell (76), Bennett (77), Olazábal (78), Walton (79), Brand Jr (80), Torrance (81), Woodman (82), Mitchell (83), Bennett (84), Olazábal (85), Walton (86), Brand Jr (87), Torrance (88), Woodman (89), Mitchell (90), Bennett (91), Olazábal (92), Walton (93), Brand Jr (94), Torrance (95), Woodman (96), Mitchell (97), Bennett (98), Olazábal (99), Walton (100), Brand Jr (101), Torrance (102), Woodman (103), Mitchell (104), Bennett (105), Olazábal (106), Walton (107), Brand Jr (108), Torrance (109), Woodman (110), Mitchell (111), Bennett (112), Olazábal (113), Walton (114), Brand Jr (115), Torrance (116), Woodman (117), Mitchell (118), Bennett (119), Olazábal (120), Walton (121), Brand Jr (122), Torrance (123), Woodman (124), Mitchell (125), Bennett (126), Olazábal (127), Walton (128), Brand Jr (129), Torrance (130), Woodman 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SPORT

One of the meanest machines on the circuit is as right as rain



None sleeker or cleaner or more purposeful or more high-revving: the Williams Renault FW14, with Mansell at the wheel, making its first appearance with an impressive showing on a track made treacherous by rain at Silverstone

Mansell riding high on Dolphin

By a CORRESPONDENT

DESPITE heavy rain and a treacherous track, Nigel Mansell was happy with the debut of the Williams Renault FW14 at Silverstone yesterday. Even the weather conditions could not dampen his enthusiasm as he completed some 50 laps of the Northampton track's southern test circuit.

Serious testing will start next week at the Ricard circuit in France. The Renault-powered FW14 is one of the sleekest and most purposeful Formula One cars. Mansell immediately nicknamed the car "The Dolphin" after its smooth, clean looks.

Designed by Patrick Head, a Williams director, it features a six-speed, semi-automatic gearbox similar to that pioneered by Ferrari and a new version of Renault's high-revving V10 engine. The engine is said to be smaller, lighter and more rigid. It may be the highest-revving grand prix engine ever, featuring Renault's system of pneumatic valve actuation.

The car will make its debut in the hands of Mansell and his Italian team-mate, Riccardo Patrese, at the opening round of the world championship in Phoenix in three weeks' time.

Bates defeated as Holmes takes his place

By CLIVE WHITE

KEN Bates's attempt to turn defeat into victory ended in failure yesterday when he was comprehensively beaten by Maxwell Holmes, a Leeds United director, in a head-to-head vote for election to the Football League management committee.

The Chelsea chairman bowed to pressure and resigned as a committee member last month after his club was fined £105,000 by the League for making irregular payments to players.

With typical audacity, Bates immediately offered himself for re-election but his attempt to win what amounted to a vote of confidence from his fellow first division chairmen backfired yesterday when he was beaten by 11 votes to six, with two abstentions and one spoilt paper.

The League declined to give a breakdown of the postal ballot but it was understood that Bates did not have the support of most, if not all, of the "Big Five" — Arsenal, Everton, Liverpool, Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur.

Colin Hutchinson, the Chelsea

chief executive, said that Bates, who is on holiday in Bali, "extended his congratulations and best wishes to Maxwell Holmes" but was not upset at the verdict. "He's very relaxed. The news certainly won't spoil his holiday." The election issue, Hutchinson said, did not take up more than 45 seconds of the ten-minute conversation.

It would appear that the arrival in the political arena of Holmes, who at 60 is one year older than Bates, finally provided many first division clubs with what they saw as an attractive, moderate alternative — Holmes describes himself as a "traditionalist" — to the more outspoken Bates.

When Bates previously stood for election last summer in opposition to Ron Noades, the Crystal Palace chairman, eight clubs abstained. Bates polled nine votes then and Chelsea's recent indiscretions, which reflected badly upon Bates, may have cost him some of that support.

The fact that eight of Holmes's ten years as a director have been spent in the second division with Leeds

and therefore has no great affinity with first-division clubs was further evidence that the clubs were voting against Bates as much as for Holmes.

Holmes, who thanked his opponent for "conducting the campaign in a dignified way", has been at great pains throughout to emphasise that there was no personal animosity on his part towards Bates, whom he said he liked.

"There were two main reasons why I put my name forward for election. Firstly, it was a question of principle because I did not think that Ken Bates should have been allowed to have got away with what he wanted. I felt that it was wrong for him to stand unopposed. The second reason was that I felt I could bring some expertise to this role."

Though Holmes may have been elected with the help of the "Big Five", he is a self-confessed supporter of the smaller clubs. "I think that it is important that the management committee is aware of the needs and aspirations of those clubs outside of the first division."

Rise of Holmes based on respect

By IAN ROSS

MAXWELL Holmes's fellow directors at Leeds United will deny that his election to the Football League's management committee will mark the beginning of a rise to a position of national prominence.

In the eyes of the Leeds board in general, and Leslie Silver, the chairman, in particular, Holmes has for many years been the public face of the club.

After his appointment to the Leeds board ten years ago, Holmes became the unofficial spokesman on the club's hooliganism problem, an unenviable task but one which he tackled with refreshing honesty and enthusiasm.

Mutual respect grew from his meetings with the sport's hierarchy during several Football Association enquiries into the problems of a section of the club's supporters.

Holmes, aged 60, is a retired businessman. A bachelor of science in economics, he lives in Harrogate and is a governor of the Sports Aid Foundation.

He is keenly interested in the welfare of the League's less prosperous clubs and was the driving force behind the instigation of the Yorkshire and Humberside Cup.

Meanwhile, the improved behaviour of Leeds' supporters on visits to London this season has encouraged the Metropolitan Police to agree to the club's fixture against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge being moved back to the Easter weekend. It had been rescheduled for Wednesday, March 20 but will now be played, on March 30.



Holmes: enthusiastic

Barnes hopes to go Continental

JOHN Barnes, the Liverpool and England forward, is still holding out hope that a leading Continental club will make an offer for him by the end of the season (Clive White writes). So far he has declined to accept the offer of a four-year contract by Liverpool which, he said yesterday, "they would do well to improve on".

Barnes, who was in London to launch a new soft drink, realises that his next contract is the most important of his career. Should he, at 27, agree to stay at Anfield he can give up all thoughts of ever playing abroad.

Barnes, who tackles the English winter in woollen gloves and thermal tights, warns only to certain Conti-

nental countries. "Basically it's Italy, Spain and France — maybe Germany but it's too cold there. Let me put it this way: Dinamo Kiev are a good team but I'm not going there."

It was Barnes's desire to move abroad when Watford agreed to sell him to Liverpool for £900,000 three years ago, but no foreign club came in for him. His disappointing showing in last summer's World Cup finals did nothing for his reputation abroad.

Barnes is undeterred by the unhappy experiences abroad of club colleagues like Luther Blissett and Ian Rush. "Even if ten out of 11 English players had gone abroad and had failed, I would look at the one who had made it and said 'that's me'."

The news that he had successfully shored up the damage with a cut down spinnaker pole and was heading once more for Cape Horn at nine knots, buoyed us all. To then hear that he was up to his knees in water and forced to give up the fight, left me wondering, as I peered into the fog ahead, what on earth we are doing down here.

The only race in all our minds then was the one to reach John, before the boat sank. Almost everybody in the fleet played a part, offering

suggestions, hope and luck as well as relaying vital messages through the network of worthy ham radio operators that provide the link between the race organisers and the fleet.

It was Bertie Reed, John's mentor and fellow South African, who elected to make the rescue while we talked them to within rendezvous distance, by relaying the positions of both boats as each Argos tracking satellite passed overhead.

When the pick-up was finally made, shortly after daybreak on Wednesday, elation swept the entire fleet. The tragedy we all fear most had been averted.

Before this, the nearest to a crisis had involved Kanga Birles, the Australian who is sailing Jarken. He had left his seaboots behind. Most of us carry spares but handing them

Merseyside's monument to the game

STUART JONES

A MONUMENT to the modern game was built at Goodison Park on Wednesday night. The 4-4 draw, constructed over two hours by Everton and Liverpool in their FA Cup fifth-round replay, will surely stand as a lasting memory of the finest qualities to be seen in English football.

Nobody who saw it doubted the stature of the occasion. The managers went as far as to suggest that it could be compared favourably not only to any of the previous 171 Merseyside derbies, but also to any tie staged in the world's most historic knockout competition.

Those are heavy claims but the event itself was as intoxicating as anybody could remember. It started explosively with a drive struck by Beardsley, who had been lying dormant for two months, and burned consistently until Cottee scored the last of Everton's four equalisers.

In between, two England internationals enriched the night with individual goals which sparked like diamonds. Britain's stoutest goalkeeper, Southall, was beaten from outside the area by the fearsome power of Beardsley's left foot and by the delicate precision of Barnes's right. It was appropriate that their blows should be so contrasting.

The game brought together all of the characteristic features of the present product. Staged at a typically unrelenting pace which befits continental observers, it contained an inordinate amount of raw commitment, as exemplified in particular by Burrows, and technical subtlety, as personified especially by Molloy.

Everton preferred the aerial route, though their attack was appreciably more varied than less competent and imaginative teams who exclusively pursue the long-ball game. In doing so, they caused such widespread uncertainty amid Liverpool's defence that they were effectively given three of their goals.

Liverpool, as usual, kept the ball closer to the height of the grass. Their method

was even more effective. In Beardsley, inexplicably overlooked by Kenny Dalglish since he was restored to full fitness, Barnes and Rush, they have the swiftest and most mobile front-line in the country.

Everton, as at Anfield last Sunday, employed three central defenders and used Nevin in a floating role behind Sharp and Newell. Liverpool retained a more conventional formation but their system, with Beardsley filling any number of positions, was equally flexible.

The difference in styles enhanced the fascination. So did Everton's indefatigable defiance. Refusing to concede their last chance of collecting an honour this season, they kept on rapidly pulling themselves back into contention, albeit with the generous assistance of their opponents.

The spectacle enraptured 37,766 spectators as well as those who were involved. Molloy had never expected any game like it in his 27 years. The wild unpredictability of it all reminded Allett of his school days. Neither Dalglish nor Howard Kendall could recall as exciting a derby or cup-tie.

Liverpool, the undisputed champions of the modern era, have provoked many a superlative, yet the eulogies have invariably been used to describe a crushing victory. Their most unforgettable display for this correspondence was in April three years ago when they humiliated Nottingham Forest 5-0 at Anfield.

Tom Finney could scarcely believe the evidence of his own eyes. "I've never seen skill at that pace," the revered England international said. He placed Liverpool above the Busby Babes, the Tottenham Hotspur side of 1960 and even the Brazilians.

Wednesday night's all-encompassing drama, nevertheless, has sunk into the memory of domestic fixtures and promises to remain forever.

We are just 200 miles behind Don McIntyre and gaining fast. The wind backs westerly, I roll the headsal and prepare to gybe. The front screams through at 35 knots, the breeze goes southwesterly. After the mainsail swings across and I pole out the genoa, the speed rises to over ten knots again. Here we go. But as I tidy the lines, a great ripping sound stops my heartbeat. I look forward. The roller headsal has a huge tear in it — the result of 20,000 hard sailing miles.

I have a spare but with the building seas, replacing it is impossible. I have to wait for a lull, and with winds building to hurricane force, it could be some time. We can only jog

Fair play may be deciding factor

By DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ENGLAND'S football team was judged worthy of a fair play award during their World Cup last year. The same spirit will be an essential ingredient of rugby union's World Cup this autumn as the teams with the best disciplinary record will benefit directly in the event of drawn matches.

If the final at Twickenham on November 2 is drawn, even after extra-time, the deadlock can be broken in only two ways: the country scoring most tries will be declared the winner and if they are still level, the country which has had fewer players sent off throughout the whole tournament will receive the Webb Ellis Trophy.

If that fails to divide the teams, then the trophy will be shared. The Rugby World Cup (RWC) organisers pondered and rejected the merits of a penalty shoot-out but accepted that, if all other criteria fail in matches before the final, the toss of a coin must decide. Before that, however, recognised factors such as tries, aggregate points and points difference come into play.

"It has been recognised by the International Rugby Football Board over the last two or three years that the game must be played in a fair spirit," Marcel Martin, one of the RWC directors, said yesterday. "We are telling the teams that if they are equal on the pitch and one is playing with a better spirit, they will go forward."

Geoff Cooke, the England team manager, said of the dismissal clause: "It's a good idea. It focuses the minds of the players and it is fair."

Burton, the menswear group, has agreed with the Rugby Football Union (RFU) to supply clothing to the England squad and officials for the next two years. Only a week ago Simon Hodgkinson, the England full back, was told by the RFU he could accept vouchers worth £100 from Burton, after being named player of the month by Rugby News, in conjunction with the clothing group.

Despair is an alien emotion to me but it now knocks on the cabin door. I am looking forward to rounding the Horn, heading north for the warmer waters of Punta del Este.

Last night, the Chilean navy was preparing to send a ship to rendezvous with Reed's yacht, Grinaker, off Cape Horn, to take Martin off and ferry him to Punta Arenas.

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NEW LOWER RATE

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TT 22/02/91

Icebergs and cockroaches provide dual threat

ICE. Down here in the desolate wastes of the Southern Ocean, icebergs are the greatest cause for concern. Global warming has increased the berg count to the point where some of us are counting 30 a day, and with mostly negligible visibility, our version of Russian roulette is being played out with a vengeance.

The revolver is being passed back from the front. Alain Gautier, the Frenchman who is leading the fleet, and David Adams, of Australia, who is second, have both had lucky escapes. The man to finish up with the smoking barrel was John Martin, the overall race leader who hit a "growler", one of the many large, and largely unseen chunks of ice that break away from the main bergs, and lost his boat as a result.

JOSH HALL, Britain's leading single-handed round the world yacht race, finds his latest dispatch from deep in the ice-strewn seas of the Southern Ocean

The news that he had successfully shored up the damage with a cut down spinnaker pole and was heading once more for Cape Horn at nine knots, buoyed us all. To then hear that he was up to his knees in water and forced to give up the fight, left me wondering, as I peered into the fog ahead, what on earth we are doing down here.

The only race in all our minds then was the one to reach John, before the boat sank. Almost everybody in the fleet played a part, offering

suggestions, hope and luck as well as relaying vital messages through the network of worthy ham radio operators that provide the link between the race organisers and the fleet.

It was Bertie Reed, John's mentor and fellow South African, who elected to make the rescue while we talked them to within rendezvous distance, by relaying the positions of both boats as each Argos tracking satellite passed overhead.

When the pick-up was finally made, shortly after daybreak on Wednesday, elation swept the entire fleet. The tragedy we all fear most had been averted.

Before this, the nearest to a crisis had involved Kanga Birles, the Australian who is sailing Jarken. He had left his seaboots behind. Most of us carry spares but handing them

over would break the outside assistance rule. A few ways of skirting the problem have been sired on the radio, such as scribbling a note on them so they would pass legally as a written message. If we wait until his toes turn blue, they could become essential medical supplies. Birles decided to make do with multiple socks and some size-ten ziplock plastic bags.

I forgot one or two things myself prior to departure. One was to fumigate. Two nights after leaving Sydney a two-inch cockroach raced across the chart table. Not wishing to carry a colony of these critters back to Ipswich, I went on safari with the insect repellent — a size-nine shoe!

In the early hours of February 15, I am on deck waiting for a front to come through.

We are just 200 miles behind Don McIntyre and gaining fast. The wind backs westerly, I roll the headsal and prepare to gybe. The front screams through at 35 knots, the breeze goes southwesterly. After the mainsail swings across and I pole out the genoa, the speed rises to over ten knots again. Here we go. But as I tidy the lines, a great ripping sound stops my heartbeat. I look forward. The roller headsal has a huge tear in it — the result of 20,000 hard sailing miles.

I have a spare but with the building seas, replacing it is impossible. I have to wait for a lull, and with winds building to hurricane force, it could be some time. We can only jog

along under main and staysail, running on only two cylinders. If I thought my bad luck had run its course, I was wrong. Once again, Spirit and I have to ease off the throttle and watch the others slip away.

Despair is an alien emotion to me but it now knocks on the cabin door. I am looking forward to rounding the Horn, heading north for the warmer waters of Punta del Este.

Last night, the Chilean navy was preparing to send a ship to rendezvous with Reed's yacht, Grinaker, off Cape Horn, to take Martin off and ferry him to Punta Arenas.

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